# THE LIFE AND ODES OF GHALIB

# BY THE SAME AUTHOR

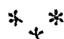
## SINCE OUR FALL

Thoughts and reflections on Muslim India: a critical enquiry into the causes of Islamic decay



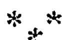
## TAMIR-I-NAU

Principles of reconstruction of Islamic Society; presented in the light of the Holy Quran and supported by modern sciences



## THE POET OF THE EAST

The life and work of the late Dr Sheikh Sir Mohammad Iqbal, embracing a critical survey of his poetical works and teachings; with a foreword by Dr. R. A. Nicholson, of Cambridge.



# THE LIFE AND ODES OF GHALIB

Being a short account of the life of Mirza Ghalib, the great Moghul poet of Delhi, and selected translations from his Urdu Diwan

*by*

ABDULLA ANWAR BEG

*M.A., M.O.L., LL.B.,*

ADVOCATE, HIGH COURT

LAHORE

URDU ACADEMY

LOHARI GATE

LAHORE

*Printed by*
*JACOB & BROS., at the ARABIAN PRESS*
*Hospital Road, Lahore, and published by*
*M. Muhammad Hanif, Proprietor, Urdu Academy (Pb.)*
*Lohari Gate, Lahore*



# PREFACE

TO-DAY when the world forces are furiously working to bring about a closer understanding between the various peoples of the globe, the study of the progress of human thought and literature is indeed as instructive as it is fascinating. Apart from its inestimable value as the great heritage of the ancestors of contemporary man, all that man has thought and conceived is valuable data in the various domains of humanistic sciences. In the realm of literature, the books of poetry afford the best opportunity for a student of humanism—to study human nature and the behaviour of the human spirit.

While it is true that there has been a genuine effort on the part of international writers to build up a world literature in the real sense, it must be regretfully said that most of the Eastern men of letters have not found their right place in world literature, merely because their works have not been presented to the Western people. The conspicuous

lack of representation of the East and all that is great and glorious pertaining to it has been keenly felt by students of international thought and much is desired to be done in this direction. With the exception of Omar Khayyam and a few others, a great many poets of real merit have remained hidden from the eyes of the world—flowers that blossomed only to blush unseen.

Mirza Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib, of Delhi, whose name needs no introduction to the Indian student was India's premier Urdu and Persian poet during the regime of the last Moghul Emperor. During his lifetime, the poet was fairly popular but real appreciation of his verse, on which alone can rest the fame of a poet, came a few decades after his death. With the marked progress of education in the current century, Ghalib has been widely read and the criticism evoked by his works has been both fair and unfair. He has been particularly appreciated for the humanistic touch of his verse, although it must be said that the poet has a pessimistic view on life and his verse is hardly helpful in the reshaping of things, specially when the people

of India are thinking of revaluation and reconstruction. But as far his art—power of communication, depth of vision, chaste expression, with his peculiar outlook on life—is concerned, the poet raised a pinnacle of perfection which is sure to remain an object of attraction for a long time to come.

With all the popularity of his verse, particularly of his Urdu *Ghazals*, the poet's works have not been so far introduced to the West and his verse is inaccessible to the English reader. I have, therefore, made a modest attempt to present in the following pages, a brief sketch of the poet's life with selected translations of his Urdu *Ghazals* which, it is hoped, will prove a useful introduction to the great poet's life and work. While writing the poet's life, I have constantly held in view the necessity of describing the events of his life in chronological order which, I hope, will add to the value of his work.

LAHORE,
*Winter, 1940* A. ANWAR BEG

# CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

*By John Clive Roome*

Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg needs no introduction, but he has, for reasons best known to himself, asked me to write an introduction to his book *The Life and Odes of Ghalib*. I know Urdu only as a journalist who has spent many years of his life in India may be expected to know it, not as a scholar. Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has made a serious study of Urdu, and not only of Urdu but also of Persian and Turkish, as this book that he has written dealing with a period in the history of Urdu when it was with India on the threshold of great political changes eloquently bears witness. The fact that Ghalib was poet laureate in the Court of the last of the Moghuls alone makes his poems of interest to the philologist studying the developments that have taken place in Urdu as a language.

In the Urdu poems of Ghalib we find Urdu as it was after about 800 years of its evolution as a dialect distinct from Prakrit. Those who trace the beginnings of Urdu from the day

when it acquired its Turkish name forget the impact of Persian words on Prakrit when the stream of Muslim invaders began to flow into India. The Urdu of the days of Ghalib marked the culmination of the influence of Persian in its vocabulary, especially in verse, which then monopolised the literature in the language. The Urdu of the man in the street and the Urdu of prose was different from the Urdu of Ghalib, the poet, and the Urdu of Ghalib reflected the political change through which India was then passing.

Persian was the language of the Courts in India in Ghalib's day, and it remained the language of the Courts for many years after the death of Ghalib, but with the approaching end of the Moghul Empire Persian in India was becoming stereotyped as an official language.

In spite of the fact that Ghalib also employed Persian to express his poetic thoughts, in his Urdu poems he avoided the ornate Persian style of his day and even many Persian words. It was the simplicity of his style that was the secret of his success as a poet after his death. It was his sincerity which placed him in a niche of his own as an Urdu poet.

Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has for the first time translated into English many of the most characteristic Urdu odes of Ghalib, and his short life sketch of the poet gives the reader an insight into the springs of the poet's mind.

Ghalib lived in times of stress and he did not escape the effects of the upheaval caused by the passing of the last of the Moghuls from Delhi to the obscurity of life as a political exile in Burma. He saw the curtain rung down on the Great Moghul Empire, and the entire fabric of the social order in Delhi undergo a drastic change. The tragedy of the Moghul Empire was the crowning tragedy of the poet's life.

In Ghalib's Urdu odes we see the spirit of the times at work. In his Persian poems also, Ghalib foreshadowed the departure from the tradition of the past which sacrificed almost everything to form. Ghalib, more than even Rafi-us-Sauda or Arzu, deserves to be called the father of Urdu poetry. He established a new tradition in Urdu literature which is still an active force. The simplicity and directness which Ghalib imparted to Urdu poetry grew in effectiveness in the works of his pupil, Hali, and Ghalib may justly claim to have inspired Iqbal.

After Ghalib, Urdu only needed the evolution of a literary tradition in prose to raise it to the dignity of a language capable of becoming the mirror of thought. To the British administrators of India is due the credit of furthering the cause of Urdu prose. But for the fact that British military officers needed text-books in Urdu to unravel its mysteries as a language, the College in Fort William would probably not have undertaken to have works written in Urdu prose. In Hyderabad, the work of the College in Fort William is being carried a stage further, and Urdu may now be said to be passing through a process of modernisation.

Born as are all languages as a result of the commingling of different currents of thought, Urdu appears to have retained for a longer time than perhaps any other language the distinction between written and spoken words. Indeed, Urdu spent a very long period of apprenticeship as a language of the camp or market-place. Many before Ghalib had explored the literary possibilities of Urdu, but even the Brahman Nusrati in his *Gulshan-i-Ishq*, writing in the days of Ali Adil Shah in Bijapur, could not help drawing freely upon

the resources of Persian to increase the powers of expression of Urdu. It was Ghalib who first attempted to give Urdu its place among the languages of the world independent of the many other languages which had gone to enrich its vocabulary.

Ghalib little knew when he was enunciating his principles of Urdu composition that whatever else the political changes that he was witnessing in Delhi and, with it, in India may bring in their train, Urdu was, as a result of these changes, destined to acquire a new dignity. Not many years after the death of Ghalib, Urdu took the place of Persian as the language of the Courts.

In Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg's biography of Ghalib, we get a glimpse of the forces which moulded the life of the poet. Like many poets everywhere in the world, Ghalib was an apt pupil, as he says, in " the school of the grief of the heart." This gives his poetic thought its incisiveness. This also makes him impatient of the orgy of imagery which, in his day, was regarded as the highest form of poetic expression. Ghalib finds it difficult to escape altogether from the tyranny of convention but

there is in his odes an economy of far-fetched similes and other figures of speech, as compared with the works of other poets using Urdu as the vehicle of expression who came before him, which is surprising. Ghalib's "Ode to Spring" which Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has included among the odes he has translated, is, perhaps, the first ode in Urdu in which the poet has not made the spring an occasion for indulging in such an extravagance of language that its wonder has made one forget the spring itself. Ghalib has made simple words in his ode to spring conjure up the miracle of spring. In Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg's selection of Ghalib's odes, the translation of the "Ode to Spring," accurate as it is, yet reveals the limitations of a translation in conveying the thoughts of a poet from the language he has employed into another. The sun and moon, for instance, in Ghalib's ode (page 163) are not ordinary spectators of the coming of spring; they are *tamashai* with the sense of wonderment and awe of spectators witnessing the great drama of the advent of spring. Ghalib, again, calls upon mankind, dwellers upon the mound of dust of the earth, to learn not only the secret of the

"world-adorning," of spring but also of humility. In describing how the magic touch of spring brings the earth "face to face with the dome of the jewelled sky," the poet reveals far more than the transformation of the dust of the earth into a vault rivalling the one of "the jewelled sky." It is the miracle of the transmutation of the dust which the poet reveals. It is to see this miracle of "the grass and the flower"—the lifeless dust changed into verdure throbbing with the promise of life and "jewelled" with flowers—that "the eye of the narcissus has been given sight."

Now that Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has begun with Iqbal and Ghalib to introduce them to those who cannot read their works in the original, I trust he will continue with the translation into English of the works of other poets of India who employed Urdu as the vehicle of their thoughts. He is well qualified to act as the interpreter of these poets. Besides English, Irani and Arabic, he also knows French and German. Within about four years of leaving college, he has already two very creditable books, *Since Our Fall* and *Tamir-i-Nau*, to his credit, and even if his life as a lawyer

practising in the Lahore High Court makes extraordinary demands on his time, all those who have read his critical appreciation of Iqbal as a poet, and those who now read his *Life and Odes of Ghalib* would like to see him continue to serve the cause of Oriental literature.

The onslaught to which Urdu has been subjected, as I think unreasonably, by those who champion the cause of Hindi makes it necessary to place both Urdu and Hindi in their right perspective as languages of India. Basically, Urdu and Hindi are not different languages. They have acquired their distinctive characteristics as a result of the changes through which India has passed during a period of some 800 years. The literature in Urdu and Hindi is the heritage of all those who live in India as it is also of others outside India, and it is impossible to advance the cause of either of these languages by attempts to hinder the development of the other.

Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has only to reveal the hidden treasures of Urdu literature to those who now dispute the claim of Urdu as the *lingua franca* of Northern India at least, if not of India, to make them realise the injury they

would inflict upon India by crippling the powers of Urdu as the vehicle of thought. If only the broad-mindedness of Ghalib were the norm of thought in India, the conflict between Urdu and Hindi as the other sectional differences which now make life intolerable would become things of the past.

"Faithfulness with the condition of stability is the root of faith;
"If the Brahman breathes his last in the idol-house, O bury him in the Kaaba!"

says Ghalib (page 137), and for those who think with him there could not be any conflict between Urdu and Hindi for pride of place among the languages of India.

However, those who think that they can relegate Urdu to the limbo of forgotten dialects are wasting their time. The works of poets, like Ghalib, cannot be erased from the pages of life any more than events of history. Languages only die when they cease to derive their sustenance from the stream of life, and yet they do not die because of the influence they have exerted in moulding life when they were pulsating with vitality. Nor can languages be created at will or revived by artificial respira-

tion. Urdu would cease to be a language and Ghalib would be forgotten only when Urdu has lost the power to grow. Urdu shows no signs of having reached a static stage. If Ghalib revealed an unsuspected virility in Urdu, it is to-day revealing an adaptability to the changing circumstances of life which is surprising, and there is historical aptness in the fact that Urdu is undergoing a process of development in the Deccan where it first took wing in the realm of literature.

J. Clive Roome

" SHALIMAR "
LAHORE
March 17, 1941

*TO*

MY YOUNGER DAYS
AND DREAMS

# PART I

# LIFE OF GHALIB





## INTRODUCTORY

ON DECEMBER 27, 1797 (the 8th night of Rajab, 1212 A.H.), in the historic city of Akbarabad (Agra) where the celestial Taj Mahal stands as a lasting monument to Moghul glory and art, was born one of India's greatest poetical geniuses—Mirza Ghalib, who during the autumnal days of the Moghul Empire chanted like a "hundred-throated" nightingale the sweetest and saddest love songs ever sung by an Indian lyricist. While the Taj has been shining, since the days of Shah Jahan as a jewel of perfection in the realm of art and has attracted hosts of visitors from all corners of the world, the works of Mirza Ghalib constitute a marvellous achievement in the domain of poetry both Urdu and Persian and have been widely appreciated for the poet's wonderful expression, chaste style and flights of imagination.

Rightly, Ghalib has been regarded as one of the greatest exponents in the art of writing *Ghazals* and the lustre of his verse profusely

illumines the reader's vision and heart in the chamber of love, with its Oriental associates—the Cup, the Carafe and the Saki. The Taj was raised to the memory of the Emperor Shah Jahan's royal consort at a time when the sun of the Moghul glory had risen to its zenith. Those were different days—the Moghul spirit was alive; the builders of the Taj could be created, that is to say, Art had its patrons. Mirza Ghalib, as a poet, appeared in a fast-disintegrating society when the dramatic end of the Moghul Empire had drawn nigh. A great political chaos had overtaken the Moghuls and arts and learning were on the wane. In such circumstances, the advent of Ghalib is a surprising phenomenon Of course, it was the old Moghul spirit that found expression in one of its many phases—Art, keeping the poet's heart throbbing at a time when the Moghul was facing a political collapse. The glory of the Moghul, however, shall shine for all time—the Taj will be looked upon as Art personified, and Ghalib as a great artist and his poetry as the shrine of songs that represents pathos, love and beauty.



## CHAPTER I

# A TURKISH FAMILY

NAJM-UD-DAULA Dabir-ul-Mulk Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, to give him his full name, was a Turk (Aibak) by race. He traced his descent from the House of Turan, son of Faridun and has more than once proudly referred in his works to his high connections with the great Turkish rulers, such as Pashang, Sanjar and others :—

غالب از خاک پاک تورانیم
لاجرم در نسب فره‌مندیم
ایبکیم از جماعهٔ اتراک
در تمامی ز ماه ده چندیم

Ghalib ! We are from the sacred dust of Turan,
Doubtless, we are glorious in dynastic origin ;
We are Aibaks, from amongst the class of Turks,
In fullness, we are ten times superior to the moon.

ساقی چو من پشنگی و افراسیابیم
دانی که اصل گوهرم از دودهٔ جم است

میراث جم کہ مے بود اکنوں بمن سپار
زاں پس رسد بہشت کہ میراث آدم است

O Saki ! As I belong to the line of Pashang and Afrasiyab,
You know that my origin is from the House of Jamshid ;
Give me now the wine which is the legacy of Jamshid
And then will pass to me Paradise, which is the legacy of Adam.

According to Ghalib himself, as he wrote in a letter, his grandfather had migrated from Transoxiana to India during the reign of Shah Alam (this does not seem to be correct, it was perhaps during the time of Muhammad Shah). In those days, the Delhi Sultanate was unstable. Being in the service of Shah Alam with fifty horses, a Pargana was made over to him to meet his personal expenses. In another letter, the poet while relating the history of his forefathers says that his ancestors had a close relationship with the Seljuk Turks, who raised a standard of high military leadership during the Seljuk reign. But with the march of time their glory vanished and the spirit of adventure

and depredation took them from place to place in search of Fortune. Among them Sultanzada Tarsam Khan, from whom Ghalib claimed his direct descent, had settled in Samarkand. Ghalib's grandfather, being not on good terms with his father emigrated to India and attached himself to Nawab Muin-ul-Mulk in Lahore, but when "the carpet of Muin-ul-Mulk's affairs was rolled up," he came to Delhi and took service under Zulfiqar-ud-Daula Mirza Najaf Khan Bahadur. Abdullah Beg Khan, father of Ghalib, was born in Delhi.

Ghalib's grandfather still spoke Turkish and of his sons, the names of only two are known: Mirza Abdullah Beg Khan (father of Ghalib) and Mirza Nasrullah Beg Khan. After the death of their father, the two brothers took to their ancestral profession, military service. Abdullah Beg Khan moved to Lucknow and was sometime in the service of Asaf-ud-Daulah. A short time after, he made his way to Hyderabad and entered the service of Nizam Ali Khan with a troop of three hundred horsemen. He stayed there for many years, but later he lost his commission. In confusion and

disappointment, he set his face towards Alwar and served under Raja Bakhtawar Singh. He was killed in a conflict with a rebel Zamindar at Rajgarh and was buried there. The incident took place probably in 1802 when Ghalib was only five years of age. Abdullah Beg Khan left two sons—Asadullah Khan Ghalib and Yusuf Khan; the latter was two years younger than Ghalib; there is mention of a sister, but we know little of her

After the tragic death of Abdullah Beg Khan, the burden of looking after the children fell upon the shoulders of Nasrullah Beg Khan. He was the Subedar of Agra on behalf of the Mahrattas, but then the territory of Agra passed into British hands. Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan Bahadur Rustam Jang of Ferozepur Jhirka and Jagirdar of Loharu, whose sister had been betrothed to Nasrullah Beg Khan, was a supporter of the British. He approached Lord Lake and secured for Nasrullah Beg a commission in the cavalry. Ghalib writes that Lord Lake issued an order to Nasrullah Beg to enlist horsemen in the army and was appointed Commander of a Regiment of four hundred horsemen. He was

granted a life-time Jagir with an annual income of about a lakh and a half rupees. Nasrullah Beg died suddenly in 1806. In exchange for his Jagir Lord Lake granted to the members of the bereaved family a fixed annual sum of ten thousand rupees, which was included in Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's Jagir, but the Nawab did not give them more than three thousand rupees annually, out of which Ghalib used to receive only Rs. 750.

Khwaja Ghulam Hussain Commandant, maternal grandfather of Ghalib, as his appellation shows, was an honoured military officer of the Meerut Government and was one of the nobles of Agra. He had vast jagirs and property, which is apparent from one of Ghalib's letters, wherein he describes many blocks of houses and *havelis* in Agra that belonged to his grandfather. The income and the total value of the property can easily be estimated by the fact that Khwaja Ghulam Hussain's managing agent had slowly risen to a status in life which made it necessary for him to pay a sum of ten or twelve thousand rupees as revenue to the Government



## CHAPTER II

# BOYHOOD AND EDUCATION

IT APPEARS that after the death of his uncle, Ghalib went to live with his grandfather. It was a happy-go-lucky sort of life that Ghalib enjoyed in his younger days at Agra. In his own words, he was about nineteen or twenty when he used to pass his days in the company of his friends, flying kites and playing chess until late at night. Ghalib seems to have been a youth of liberal ideas and as he was staying as an orphan with his rich grandfather, he was looked after with unusual tenderness and affection ; there must have been few restrictions on the young man's movements. Thus it was not unnatural that he got into the habit of being extravagant. As he had to spend much, perhaps to keep up his social status, it is not difficult to see how Ghalib acquired the early habit of borrowing money which involved him in great difficulties later on. Out of the annual sum that the members of the family used

to get from Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan, Ghalib received Rs. 750 only and an equal sum was given to his brother Yusuf Khan. The remaining 1,500 rupees were received by Nasrullah Beg Khan's mother and his three sisters. When Ghalib had moved to Delhi, most probably his mother sent him some money. In view of the fact that the ancestors of Ghalib were soldiers by profession, Ghalib would have taken up military service, fought and died as a soldier, if he had allowed things to take their course, but nature had planned a different career for him—that of a poet. While his forefathers had carried steel all over Central Asia and had fallen in the battle-fields of India, the poet was destined to become a master of the pen and a writer of verse, who could rightfully claim equality with the world's front rank poets.

But with all his care-free life as a youth, the education of Ghalib was not neglected. He used to have lessons from Sheikh Muhammad Mu'azzam who was, in those days, one of the learned scholars of Agra. Ghalib's various technical references in his works show that he was fairly acquainted with the current

knowledge of arts and sciences, such as Philosophy and Astronomy. Besides, he seems to be not wholly unconversant with the medical knowledge prevalent in those days. He had also acquired a working knowledge of Arabic grammar. But one thing which is apparent from the very perusal of his poetry is that he had very carefully studied prosody and had mastered its intricacies, otherwise it would be impossible to attempt the kind of *ghazals* which he wrote with such great felicity, in spite of their unwieldly metres. Apart from his educational achievements, the most distinguishing factor is Ghalib's erudite scholarship in the domain of Persian literature. He was yet young when he was given to the study of Zuhuri and other great writers. He was a born poet and had begun his early attempts in poetry at the age of eleven and that too was perhaps in Persian (one of the poet's friends is said to have reminded the poet in Delhi that he had written a *Mathnawi* at a still younger age).

One of the most interesting aspects of Ghalib's education was that he had the good fortune of coming in contact with a Persian

scholar (a Parsi) who had adopted Islam as his faith and had come to Agra as a traveller about the year 1810 and stayed for two years with Ghalib. His original name was Hurmuz (or Hurmuzd) and was now called Abdus-Samad. He was a great scholar of Arabic and Persian, particularly of classical Persian (*Farsi-i-Qadim*). During his stay at Agra, he devoted his attention to Ghalib's education ; his lessons in Persian grammar were of particular importance to the latter and had far-reaching effects on the poet's later Persian poetry and prose. In Ghalib's own words, "Mulla Abdus-Samad belonged to the race of the fifth Sassanian king, vastly read in Philosophy, particularly Logic and was a pious man from whom Ghalib learned both styles of writing Persian—with and without the mixture of Arabic words ; that is to say, gold was tested on touchstone......the teacher was without exaggeration the Jamasp of his time and the Buzurg-mihr of the contemporary world." Ghalib seems to have impressed his teacher greatly who in a letter makes a very affectionate reference to his pupil.

As for the art of poetry, Ghalib was not a

regular pupil of any poet. It was only nature's gift, as is shown by his profound originality in his verse that made him the unique master of this art.



CHAPTER III

# MARRIAGE AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

GHALIB married Umara Begum, the younger daughter of Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan M'aruf, on Rajab 7, 1225 A. H., when he was only thirteen and his wife eleven. He often referred to his marriage as "imprisonment for life" and described a wife as a "shackle" and carrying the simile still further, Delhi was for him a "prison-house." The father-in-law of Ghalib was the younger brother of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan Bahadur Rustam Jung, Rais of Ferozepur Jhirka and Jagirdar of Loharu. He was a very pious man and spent his days in devotion to God and was for this reason respected by his elder brother. M'aruf was a poet of no mean order. In his poetical efforts, he sought the advice of Shah Naseer of Delhi. He died in 1826 and was buried in the vicinity of Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din's tomb. Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan had two sons and two daughters. One of his sons was Mirza Ali

Bakhsh Khan Ranjur who had always very cordial relations with Ghalib. The other was Mirza Ali Nawaz Khan. Bunyadi Begum was the Nawab's elder daughter who was married to Nawab Ghulam Husain Masrur and the younger was Umara Begum, the life companion of Mirza Ghalib.

After his marriage, Ghalib seems to have stayed a few years at Agra, but according to one of his letters, dated February 16, 1862. to Nawab Ala-ud-Din, his journeys to and from Delhi began when he was only seven years of age; he writes: "My dear soul! This is not the Delhi in which you were born; this is not the Delhi in which you have been educated .. This is not the Delhi which I have been visiting since the time when I was seven. Again this is not the Delhi where I have been staying for the last fifty-one years. It is a camp..." The facts stated by the poet himself, however, show that he left Agra just after his marriage and occupied the *Haveli* of Shaban Beg, for the first time, as his residential quarters. His regular stay in Delhi probably began in 1817 or 1818 A. D.

From the poet's letters to his friends and casual references in his poetry, one gets the impression that he had a very bizarre view of married life. The duties of a husband to his wife seem to have been very burdensome to Ghalib, and he felt the burden all the more, because he was married at so young an age. He was perhaps conscious of the fact when he said :—

Close to the nest, there lay very strong nets;
*We* had not even flown before *we* were caught !

The verse brings to light the painful feelings of the poet which could not be softened even by the slow passage of time. There are some uncharitable references to the difficulties arising out of matrimonial relations, that one finds in the poet's works. Thus, while writing to a friend on the death of the wife of another friend, he quotes Hakim Sanai's verses, wherein the father said to his son :—

Good fellow ! indulge in "free love," but a wife ? Never !
Take advice from the people, not from me !

But all this does not necessarily mean that

Ghalib had any aversion to marriage or desired to be set free from his duties. It was only the poet's way of giving expression to his natural sense of humour, in his peculiar way of writing in a lighter vein.

Beghum Ghalib, as she belonged to a very noble family and was the daughter of a pious father, inherited an orthodox sense of religion. Ghalib, on the other hand, was a liberal youth and was far from being an orthodox Muslim. He even ventured to drink against the traditions of his family. It is, therefore, said that his wife used to keep her cooking utensils separate from those of Ghalib. In view of these facts, one is led to think that the atmosphere of the house in such conditions was not peaceful, but evidence is not lacking that the couple led a fairly happy life and they shared each other's happiness and sorrows throughout their life. Whenever Ghalib was out of Delhi, he was very anxious to write to his wife; where'ver he might be—Calcutta, Lucknow or Rampur, he wrote to his wife in Delhi. Her anxieties were his own. He would always see that she had enough money to spend. It is true

that circumstancial difficulties pressed him hard, but he made no pretensions to hide his grief :—

> "Married life is death to me. I have never been pleased with being so entangled."

Ghalib had seven children, but all of them died young. To avoid disappointment of his natural paternal sense, he adopted Mirza Zain-ul-Abidin Khan Arif, the budding poet (Beghum Ghalib's nephew) as his son, but he, too, died in his youthful days to the great dismay of Ghalib. The poet wrote one of the most pathetic elegies found in Urdu literature on the death of young Arif; the first couplet of which runs :—

> It was essential for you to wait for me, a few days more !
> Why did you go alone, now stay there alone a few days more !

Arif was married to Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan's sister and had two sons—Baqir Ali Khan and Husain Ali Khan—who were held in great affection by Ghalib. The poet was never disturbed by their childish frolics. They would not let him take his meals in comfort. They would disturb his sleep, but all this did not

perturb Ghalib. During the poet's trip to Rampur, Baqir and Husain were with him.

According to Hali, Ghalib never purchased a house as his personal property. He passed his days as a tenant, except that he occupied for sometime Kalai Khan's house for which he had to pay no rent. After leaving Kalai Khan's house, he moved to Hakim Muhammad Hasan Khan's Haveli where he stayed upto July, 1860. The poet used to move from one house to another according to his convenience, but never so far as to be outside the sphere of Qasim Jan ki Gali or Habash Khan ka Phatak. His last house, where he breathed his last, was behind the mosque, adjoining the Diwankhana of Hakim Mahmud Khan. The poet had this house in view :—

مسجد کے زیر سایہ اک گھر بنا لیا ہے
یہ بندۂ کمینہ ہمسایہ خدا ہے

In the shadow of a mosque, I have raised a house,
This unworthy slave is thus a neighbour of God.

But it was not always that Ghalib occupied comfortable houses, as one can gather from some of his letters written to his intimate friends. In fact the conditions sometimes were awe-

inspiring as the poet writes after a heavy shower of rain :—

> "I don't fear death ; I am confounded by lack of comfort. The ceiling has become a veritable sieve. If the cloud rains for two hours, the ceiling rains for four !"

The rainy season always brought great distress to Ghalib. While describing the condition of his abode once, he had to say :—

> ".. had the chance to stay in Noah's Ark for three months ; now have I attained salvation !"

With all these unavoidable handicaps, the poet had a fine taste in the choice of houses and tried to keep up a decent standard of living.

As will appear from the above, Ghalib's marriage was the cause of very close connections with the House of Loharu which also traces its ancestral link to Turkistan. The mention of the House of Loharu necessitates here a little digression. The direct connection of Ghalib's personal affairs such as his pension case along with the intricacies of a long-drawn out domestic

quarrel that arose out of the passing of State administration into the hands of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and many other such matters, presented in the following pages, would not be easily intelligible without a brief discussion of the domestic affairs of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's sons.

Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh had rendered great military services to Lord Lake and was, in recognition of his services, given the territory of Mewat and the State of Ferozepur Jhirka in 1805. The Nawab had also played the important rôle of a mediator between the Maharaja of Alwar and the British Government and, as a result of his efforts, their relations had considerably improved. The Maharaja of Alwar greatly appreciated the services of the Nawab and conferred the Pargana of Loharu on him. As the Nawab had a large estate, a large number of family members and relatives depended on him. The Nawab's nephew Mirza Ali Bakhsh Khan Ranjur and Ghalib stayed with the Nawab for a long time. During this peaceful period, the poet had compiled his Urdu Diwan (Bhopal copy),

when he was about twenty-five. He passed a good deal of his time at Ferozepur Jhirka. When the British forces attacked Bharatpur in 1825, both Ghalib and Ali Bakhsh were in the company of the Nawab. During these days, Mirza Ali Bakhsh asked Ghalib to write a treatise, comprising the various forms of address, words of courtesy, modes of expression, such as are usually used in the beginnings of letters. This request was responded to by the poet and he collected the general principles of Persian letter-writing in a booklet now called *Panj Ahang*, noted for its simplicity and direct expression.

In 1822, Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan had, by the permission of the British Government and the Maharaja of Alwar, declared Nawab Shams-ud-Din Khan, father of the famous poet, Dagh, the sole heir of his property. It appears that the three brothers did not agree to this decision. Some changes were afterwards effected in the terms. Thus in February, 1825, Nawab Shams-ud-Din transferred the State of Loharu to his two step brothers according to an agreement in consultation with his father.

In October, 1826, the eldest son Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan took the administration of State affairs in his hands. Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan died in October, 1827 (Minu Maqam Fakhr-ud-Daulah—1243 A. H.). A great domestic quarrel arose on account of the mutual hatred between the members of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's family. The Nawab had two wives and the children of the two ranged themselves in two different camps against one another and Ghalib was also affected by the issues involved. The quarrel slowly took on a serious turn. Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan brought a suit against his step brothers that the Pargana of Loharu should be made over to him and his step brothers could only receive pensions. His step brothers in a cross-suit stated that they were entitled to a share in the cash, precious stones, pearls, jewellery and other valuables amassed by the late Nawab. The case went up for decision before the British Resident at Delhi. The case of Ghalib's pension was already going on during the life-time of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan. The new complications only added to his discomfort. The case was, in

the end, decided by the Resident in favour of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan.

In 1830, Mr. William Fraser came to Delhi as Resident. He was a close friend of the late Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan and the Nawab's sons used to address him as "Uncle." Now the matter was again brought before Mr. Fraser. It was stated before him that the decision, as it stood, was to the sheer detriment of the younger brothers—Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. It was urged that according to the bequest of the late Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh, the State of Loharu should go to the share of these two brothers. But Fraser could not help the two brothers to that extent. Amin-ud-Din, therefore, had to go to Calcutta personally to present his case. The Calcutta authorities accepted his appeal and declared the two brothers as the lawful owners of the Loharu State. When the news of the decision of the case reached Nawab Shams-ud-Din from Calcutta, he was greatly shocked and consequently it is said that he hatched a plot to kill Mr. Fraser who was believed to have influenced the decision of the case against him. It is also

said that such a scheme had already been thought out before the decision of the case.

The story goes that Karim Khan, a Rohilla cavalier and one Anya Mew, two of the Nawab's men were sent to Delhi to get rid of Mr. Fraser. For sometime they had to stay in Delhi waiting for a chance, but had to go back in disappointment to Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan who grew angry with them. The two men again returned to Delhi with a gun and finding a suitable time one pitch-dark night shot Mr. Fraser dead from ambush. Karim Khan and Anya escaped and the Nawab was informed of the event through Anya, who by overhearing a conversation sensed the secret that the Nawab wanted to dispose of him also to avoid the leakage of any news. Anya, therefore, ran away to save his life. In the meantime, Karim Khan was arrested on suspicion as a possible culprit. Anya, who was now in Bareilly, turned a Crown witness and made allegations exposing the conspiracy of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. As a consequence, Karim Khan was hanged and after sometime an order of death sentence was also passed against the Nawab His State was confiscated and in

October, 1835, he was put on the gallows outside Kashmiri Gate, Delhi. It is said that the Nawab met his death very bravely and calmly. There were people who believed him to be an innocent man. The Nawab was buried in Qadam-i-Sharif.

Ghalib was always on good terms with Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan (Nayyar, Rakhshan), Ala-ud-Din Ahmad Khan ('Alai) and Shihab-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. They in turn had deep regard for the great poet who, it seems, had a real cause of grievance against Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, as the former's Jagir was included in Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's Jagir which had now passed into the hands of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Khan. In 1826, the differences between Ghalib and the Nawab began to take a deplorable turn. In this year (1826), when Mirza Ilahi Bakhsh M'aruf died, Ghalib's circumstances altered unfavourably. He was in dire need of money and his younger brother Mirza Yusuf had gone mad. In such a state of critical affairs, Ghalib planned a visit to the Nawab at Ferozepur Jhirka, who was in those days at

Alwar. The Nawab returned after a good many days and met the visitor with outward courtesy and gave him words that were never translated into action. In fact he was feeding the poet on hopes, who returned to Delhi disappointed. As Ghalib now saw no hope of justice at the hands of the Nawab, he made up his mind to appeal against the distribution of property by the Nawab to the Court in Calcutta. Such were the circumstances in which he undertook his journey to East India.

In an atmosphere of suspicion and mutual hatred, Ghalib, who was a friend of Mr. Fraser, was blamed to have acted as a spy against Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. The suspicion was further strengthened by the fact that Ghalib seldom moved out of his residential quarters during these days. The poet refutes these allegations in a letter to Imam Bakhsh Nasikh, but the language used by him is not so convincing.



CHAPTER IV

# JOURNEY TO CALCUTTA

IN 1826, when there was tension between members of Ghalib's family, Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan became the sole representative of his father, Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan. Under the aegis of the latter, Ghalib and his near relations used to receive only three thousand rupees as pension from Ferozepur Jhirka. The poet believed that the actual amount of pension should have been ten thousand rupees ; but the matter was not taken to the Court during Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh's administration. Now that the affairs of the State were taking a different turn, owing to the family disputes, and as Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad had altogether stopped the payment of pension to Ghalib and his wife, the only remedy left to Ghalib was to go to Calcutta personally to present his case to the judicial authorities there. He demanded ten thousand rupees as the family pension and that the amount due since May 1806 should be fully paid. During these days, the pecuniary

condition of Ghalib was far from satisfactory and the constant demands of creditors were threatening to prove the last straw. Before proceeding to Calcutta, the poet's friends had advised him to make up his differences with the Nawab. He, therefore, paid a visit to Loharu, but it served no useful purpose

No definite date can be given of Ghalib's departure from Delhi to Calcutta, but it appears that he left Delhi a short time before his arrival at Lucknow where, according to his Persian writings, he seems to have stayed for about eleven months. He set off from Lucknow to East India on June 27, 1827 (Ziq'ada 26, 1242 A. H.). When the poet reached Lucknow, Ghazi-ud-Din Hyder was the King and Mu'tmad-Daulah Agha Mir was the Naib-us-Saltanat who had started his career from a humble position, but, with the help of Nawab Beghum and the Resident, he gained influence over the King and had now almost exclusive control of State affairs. The period of his administration constitutes a dismal tale of deteriorated statesmanship. Ghalib thought of presenting a *Kasida* to Aga Mir, but he found the

ceremonial conventions *infra dig*. His mind almost revolted against such condescension, and that was due to his "upbringing in the solitary chamber of liberty" :

نازپروردهٔ خلوت گه آزادگیم
کافرم گر بسرا پردهٔ سلطان رفتم

I have been brought up by the beneficent solitude of freedom ;
I would be an infidel if I ever went to the royal abode of a Sultan.

Men of letters of Lucknow seem to have welcomed Ghalib, but the nobles such as the notorious Agha Mir, who was undoubtedly a curse to the Nawab Wazirs of Oudh, lacked the necessary vision to appreciate the traveller's poetic genius. The poet, however, soon realised the futility of an approach to the up-start. There is a reference to Lucknow in one of the poet's *ghazals* :—

لکھنؤ آنے کا باعث نہیں کھلتا یعنی
ہوس سیر و تماشا سو وہ کم ہے ہم کو

The cause of coming to Lucknow does not come to light,
As for the inclination to travel and sight-seeing —*we* have little.

Ghalib bade farewell to Lucknow on Friday, June 27, and reached Cawnpore after three days, and shortly after proceeded to Banda. He passed through small villages, and then arrived in Allahabad and ultimately reached Benares when he was in indifferent health. The poet found the Hindu city very refreshing and its attraction was the cause of his writing a *Mathnavi*, *Chiragn-i-Dair*. The only cause of distress to the poet was the separation from his friends— Fazl-i-Haq, Husam-ud-Din, Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan etc., otherwise he was content. The beauty of Benares elicited verses of praise from the poet's pen :—

جہان آباد گر نبود الم نیست
جہان آباد بادا جائے کم نیست

If there be no Jahanabad (Delhi), there is no grievance ;
May the world be populous, there is no scarcity of accomodation!

Ghalib found Benares so pleasant a city that forty years after, he wrote in one of his letters that if he had visited the city in his youthful days, he would have settled there as a permanent citizen. Ghalib proceeded from

Benares to Patna and Murshidabad, and arrived in Calcutta on February 21, 1825, (Sha'ban 4, 1243 A. H.). There he rented a spacious house in the Haveli of Mirza Ali in Simla Bazar.

Before Ghalib's arrival in Calcutta, the news of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh's death had reached him. The poet's meeting with the officials in Calcutta made him hopeful about his success in his pension case. During those days Mr. Andrew Sterling was Chief Secretary who knew Persian fairly well and, according to Ghalib, was a man of taste (the poet presented a *Kasida* to him which was greatly appreciated). Mr. Simon Fraser was then serving as Assistant Secretary. The latter met Ghalib in a very cordial manner with "an embrace and presentation of scent and betel-leaf." Mr. Sterling presented the poet's application, addressed to the Governor-General, to the Council, which, having regard to procedure, ordered the application to be first presented to the Agent at Delhi. Ghalib, therefore, wrote to his legal adviser, Hira Lall, at Delhi to secure a recommendation from Sir Edward Colebrooke, but the letter and the power-of-attorney reached Delhi after many

months. As Sir Edward had now gone on a tour, the application could not be presented. The Governor-General and his Council were also out of the station. In these circumstances, Ghalib could do but little about his case ; on the other hand, he had time enough to interest himself in poetic gatherings. There was a literary Association in the Calcutta Madrasah, under the auspices of which a monthly symposium used to be held. The symposium was a great literary entertainment which attracted a large audience with many prominent men of letters.

On one occasion, Ghalib recited a Persian *Ghazal* which evoked a storm of protest on the part of Indian scholars who relied upon the Persian scholarship of Mirza Qatil, for whom Ghalib had little regard. The correctness of the use of the word *hama* in the following verse was disputed :—

جزوے ار عالمم و از همہ عالم بیشم
ہمچو موئے کہ بتاں را ز میاں برخیزد

The objection was that the word *'alam* could not be preceded by *hama* which required a plural noun after it and the authority which Ghalib's

opponents quoted was that of Mirza Qatil. But this was a wrong view and a ridiculous objection, for, the Persian poets such as Hafiz and others use the word as Ghalib used it. Among those who ranged themselves in the opposite camp against Ghalib were Maulvi Abdul Qadir of Rampur, Maulvi Karam Husain of Bilgram, Maulvi Ni'mat Ali of Azimabad and others. Mirza Ghalib also had his supporters. During those days Kifayat Khan, the Persian Ambassador, had come to Calcutta as a representative of Shahzada Kamran of Herat. He recited many verses supporting the right use of *hama'alam.* As Mirza Ghalib was a stranger in Calcutta, he did not like to be involved in a literary dispute which was bound to affect his peace of mind. He, therefore, wrote a *Mathnavi*, *Bad-i-Mukhalif* which is a sort of an *apologia* in which the poet takes the opportunity to clarify the objection brought against his *Ghazal* and describes his adverse circumstances. The attitude of the poet, however, is compromising. He did not like to humiliate Delhi by his behaviour, but at the same time, he deprecated the blindness of Indian scholars in setting up Qatil and Waqif as indisputable authorities, for, they were Indians

and could not be quoted as authority on chaste Persian. The opponents of Ghalib in fact represented a conservative school; Ghalib, on the other hand, was relying on a group of great Persian poets such as Zuhuri, 'Urfi, Naziri and Hazin, and far more upon his personal genius :—

زله بردار کس چرا باشم
من همایم مگس چرا باشم

Why should I depend on the charity of another?
I am a phoenix; why should I be a fly?

During his stay in Calcutta, Ghalib made the acquaintance of Maulvi Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad, who became one of the poet's very close friends and often wrote letters to him. On his request, Ghalib made a selection of his Urdu and Persian verse known as *Gul-i-Ra'na*, which is rarely found now, but its preface and final note by Ghalib are included in the poet's *Kulliat-i-Farsi*. The poet stayed in Calcutta for about two years. In the beginning, matters seemed to take a favourable turn, but events were only leading to a *mirage*. There was disappointment in store for him. In a few

short lines the poet describes Calcutta, its people and the injustice done to him :—

گفتم از بہر داد - آمدہ ام
گفت بگریز و سر بسنگ مزن

I said, "I have come here with a request for justice."
(She) said, "Run away and don't strike your head against stone !"

It appears that the officials in Delhi and Calcutta had submitted reports favouring the cause of Mirza Ghalib, but, during this time, Colebrooke had to leave his office and a fresh investigation into the matter was undertaken. It was now of little use for Ghalib to continue his stay at Calcutta. He, therefore, returned to Delhi and on November 11, 1929, requested the new Agent, Francis Hawkins, to help him, but the Agent submitted his report in favour of Nawab Shams-ud-Din. Ghalib was apprised of the Agent's attitude, but he did not feel perturbed as he was sure that Mr. Sterling would set the matter right (*Guftam Sterling haq-parast ast*), but unfortunately the report had not yet reached Calcutta that Sterling died on May 23, 1830. The poet wrote an elegy on the occasion. The tide of events was now turning against Ghalib.

Lord William Bentinck, who had relied upon the validity of a document—dated June 7, 1806, purported to be issued by Lord Lake and, according to which the Nawab had to pay only five thousand rupees to the relatives of Nasr Ullah Beg—which Ghalib maintained was of no value as it did not cancel an earlier letter of grant, dated May 4, 1806, gave his decision against Ghalib as Sir John Malcolm testified to the seal of Lord Lake on the disputed document. The poet had not miscalculated the coming events in Calcutta :—

گفتم این ماه پیکران چه کس اند ؟
گفت خوبان کشور لندن -

I said, "Who are these moon-like people ?"
(She) said, "The beautiful ones of the realm of London !"

گفتم ایشان مگر دلے دارند ؟
گفت دارند لیک از آهن

I said, "Do they possess any heart ?"
(She) said, "They have, but of iron !"

Ghalib came to know of the decision of his case in August, 1831. He was not to rest satisfied with his lot. He took the matter further to the Governor-General and had a mind to

go to Calcutta once again, but he had no money to carry out his plans. He expected money from Lucknow in appreciation of his *Kasida*, but he had to wait—until the Governor-General's tour to Delhi. The dark night of disappointment had spread its wings over him and Ghalib saw no glimmer of hope. On his return to Delhi, Ghalib seldom moved out of his house. His only consolation was the company of his friends, such as Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq, Nawab Mustafa Khan, Nawab Amin-ud-Din Khan and Zia-ud-Din Khan, but in spite of his friend's sympathies, Ghalib's difficulties never showed signs of decrease. By the way, Ghalib wrote the preface to his *Diwan-i-Raikhta* in 1833 (April 16, Ziqa'da 24, 1248 A. H.). As Lord William Bentinck paid a visit to Delhi, Ghalib did not attend the meeting where the nobles of Delhi had gathered to welcome him. He believed that Lord Bentinck had not been able to do justice to his case; he still further looked to Lord Auckland as a "cloud of mercy"; (applications were submitted to him in 1836).

During this period Mr. William Fraser was put to death (March 22, 1835). In this connection, as has been mentioned before, Nawab

Shams-ud-Din was arrested and was hanged (October 3, 1835). The personal property of the Nawab was put up for sale. Many other repercussions followed and the heirs of the Nawab submitted an application to the Government to safeguard their rights. Ghalib had now a chance to present the matter for reconsideration and demanded the amount of his pension which was calculated to be two lakhs and three thousand rupees.

Ultimately, Ghalib sent his pension case to London and in a *Kasıda* addressed to Queen Victoria said :—

آں باد وخوش بود کہ شہنشاہ بحر و بر
انجام خواھش اسد اللہ خاں دھد

May it be, and it would only be good that the Empress of sea and land
May at last fulfil the desire of Asad-ullah Khan!

In short, from 1827 to 1844, Ghalib had to face a storm of worries, arising out of his pension case. During this period the poet had entertained many kinds of vague desires and nourished hopes which in the end brought nothing but disappointment to him and the psychological effect of such untoward circumstances was

calculated to be grave. This accounts for the fact that Ghalib's poetry is full of pathos and not unoften depressing and cold.

A few months before the death of Mr. Fraser, Ghalib was thinking of gaining influence in the Shah's Darbar. Akbar Shah was the ruler in those days and as Zafar was then considered not to be of sound mind, attempts were made for the recognition of Shahzada Saleem as the heir-apparent. Obviously with some prospective hopes, Ghalib wrote a *Kasida* in praise of Akbar Shah and Prince Saleem. But the Government did not approve of the plan. On the death of Akbar Shah, Zafar ascended the throne (October, 1837) and Ghalib had to readjust his attitude towards the ruler.

In 1835, after Nawab Shams-ud-Din had paid the penalty for taking part in the conspiracy against Mr. Fraser, Ali Bakhsh Khan came to stay with Ghalib. During these days Ghalib's Persian *Diwan*, *Mai Khana-i-Arzu*, had been compiled; its final note was written in 1837. The final note to the poet's Urdu *Diwan* was written by Nawab Zia-ud-Din in 1838.

From 1835 onwards Ghalib passed his days in expectation, surrounded by lingering hopes,

but he never condescended to stoop below his dignity. In 1842 when the poet was invited as a candidate for a Persian professorship at the Thomson College, he refused to see the officials as a servant and did not accept the service. In fact Ghalib was conscious of his nobility, believed in the traditional conventions of aristocracy, and spurned any kind of reflection of humiliation against his person.

In 1842-43, Ghalib's *Diwan-i-Raikhta* was published. Those were the days when poetical symposiums were very popular in Delhi and Urdu and Persian *ghazals* were equally appreciated by the audience. Mirza Ghalib paid occasional visits to these *Musha'iras*, particularly to those arranged by Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Nawab Zain-ul-Abidin 'Arif. Mamnun, Sahbai, Azurda, Zauq, Momin and many others were among the prominent poets who used to attend these literary gatherings. During the year 1845, Persian *ghazals* had become very popular in these *Musha'iras*, Ghalib published his Persian *Diwan* in 1846.



## CHAPTER V

# IN PRISON

IN 1847 (1264 A. H.), a very unfortunate event took place. The year synchronised with the poet's visit to the prison-house, the cause being his indulgence in gambling. The authorities in those days were very strict against social crimes and consequently a large number of gamblers were hauled up before the Court and sent to jail. The reports published in a contemporary paper, *Ahsan-ul-Akhbar*, throw sufficient light on the conditions prevailing in Delhi during this period. According to a report published in the paper, dated June 20, 1845, "The Kotwal of the City arrested about sixteen men for gambling and brought them before the Court. Nine men were sentenced to six month's imprisonment and fifty rupees fine...in default of payment of fine, such men were to be fettered and made to work repairing roads."

Ghalib was not given to gambling in the bazaar sense. It was with him more of a social pastime. He took keen interest in chess and other such games, but while playing these

games, there used to be a nominal bet. As the Kotwal of the City was not on good terms with the poet, he brought a false charge of gambling against him. The Magistrate, Mr. Roberts, before whom the case came up for hearing, knew little about Ghalib's social status and other personal affairs. He passed an order of six months' imprisonment with two hundred rupees as fine against the poet and in default of payment of fine, six month's further imprisonment. An additional payment of fifty rupees could relieve him of penal servitude. The decision was declared on or about July 2, 1847. The case went up in appeal before the Sessions Judge, who was closely acquainted with Ghalib and used to meet him freely in social gatherings ; but even he did not pay heed to the matter and upheld the decision of the lower Court. A further appeal to the higher Court proved of little use. After three months, the Magistrate *suo moto* sent a report to the Sadr, and Ghalib was released after having been behind the bars for three months.

Inside the Jail, Ghalib passed his days as if he were inside a judicial lock-up—with restraint on his movements (probably he was not keep-

ing good health then). Meals, clothes and other requisites reached him from home and there were few restrictions on his friends' visits to him. (The poet in his verse says that the jailer looked after his needs). With all these facilities, Ghalib regarded his imprisonment as a great insult to his name and deeply felt that his prestige had been considerably lowered. Public opinion had protested against the injustice done to the poet who was a man of high social status and was held in great respect by the people. It was at the same time feared that the poet would not be able to endure the rigours of imprisonment.

Ghalib was involved in this case on the basis of wrong information supplied by those who were inimically disposed towards him. Bahadur Shah wrote a letter of recommendation to Mu'azzam-ud-Daulah Bahadur for the release of the poet, explaining therein that he was one of the nobles of the city and all that had happened was due to the evil intentions of his envious foes. The response thereto was that the case was going on in a law court and the law could not consider any such recommendation.

Within the four walls of the prison-house, Ghalib gave expression to his feelings in one of his very important poems, *Habsiyya* :—

خواهم از بند به زندان سخن آغاز کنم
غم دل پرده دری کرد فغان ساز کنم

I wish to begin my song about bondage in the prison-house,
The grief of my heart has disclosed a secret, I utter a cry!

The poem describes the coming of the poet to the jail and the inmates' greetings to him. The poet's usual pessimistic tune is predominant throughout :—

گرچه توقع گرفتاری جاویدم نیست
لیکن از دهر دگر خوش دلی آمدم نیست

Although there is no order as to my eternal imprisonment,
Yet I do not any more expect happiness from Time.

During these dark days, Nawab Mustafa Khan Bahadur Shaifta was looking after Ghalib and he provided him with great facilities, without which the event would have proved a tragedy for Ghalib who deeply appreciated the kindness of the Nawab :—

مصطفی خاں کہ دریں واقعہ غمخوار من است
گر بمیرم چہ غم از مرگ عزادار من است

Mustafa Khan who shares my grief in this mishap—
If I die, I need not fear death—is my mourner.

In a Persian *Kasida* in praise of Nawab Mustafa Khan, the poet expressed his deep debt of obligation to the Nawab :—

بشنود بے آنکہ باد آں را برد
نالہ گر در کنج زنداں می زنم

He hears—without the agency of the wind—
My cry, even if I utter it in the corner of the prison-house !



## CHAPTER VI

# IN THE KING'S COURT

ON HIS release from prison, before he had served the full term of his sentence, Ghalib was staying with Sheikh Naseer-ud-Din *alias* Kalai Mian, a Sufi, revered by Bahadur Shah. Through Kalai Mian, who was kindly disposed towards Ghalib, the latter not only had an easy access to the King's court, but also gained a considerable influence there. Before Kalai Mian's recommendation, Ghalib had already established his connection with the members of the Royal family as he often paid visits to the Fort on various occasions, submitted *Kasidas* and received presents and *Khal'at* in appreciation thereof. Thus we find a *Kasida* in Ghalib's *Kulliat* in praise of Akbar Shah who died in 1837. There were people at the court who did not like to see Ghalib gain a position of influence there and were perhaps creating obstacles in his way. Thus the poet, in a *Kasida* to the King, brings to his notice the fact that he did not find his way to the Royal Assembly :—

بہ بارگہ نرسم خانۂ سپہر خراب
ندیم شاہ نشوم روئے روزگار سیاہ
چہ سر کنم روش مدح گستری چون مرا
ببزم خسرو گیتی ستاں نباشد راہ

I don't find access to the King's court ; may the house of sky perish !

I am not an associate of the Shah ; may the face of Time turn black !

How can I start a new career of singing praises when I

Do not find my way to the Assembly of the world-conquering King.

There are verses in which Ghalib made sarcastic remarks against his rivals and the satirical expression of the poet reveals the hidden influences working against him.

On June 4, 1850, Ghalib had the honour to receive the title of Najm-ud-Daula, Dabir-ul-Mulk, Nizam Jang from the King and was appointed a writer of the history of the Timur dynasty, a post which carried an annual sum of six hundred rupees as emolument and *Khal'at* Ghalib used to receive his monthly pay regularly up to April, 1857, except on one occasion when an order was issued to the effect that the employees in the Fort should receive their pay

in a lump sum twice a year. As the poet always badly needed money, the order proved a source of distress to him. He, therefore, submitted a few verses, characteristic of his humour, to the King and soon had his grievance removed.

The year 1850 proved very auspicious for Ghalib; besides the great honours that were showered on him in the form of titles and his appointment as a chronicler, he was asked to work as a tutor to the heir-apparent Shahzada Fath-ul-Mulk, the remuneration being four hundred rupees annually. (The Shahzada, who had married the widow of Nawab Shams-ud-Din—Dagh's mother, it seems, attached no importance to past events. But Prince Fath-ul-Mulk was not destined to live for more than two years after Ghalib's appointment.

In the beginning of *Mihr-i-Nimroz*, Ghalib throws some light on his access to the King through the agency of Kalai Mian, but Hakim Ahsan-Ullah Khan's personal regard for the poet and appreciation of his prose were in no degree less responsible for Ghalib's appointment as a compiler of the history of the Timurid Kings—*Mihr-i-Nimroz*. Thus Ghalib writes :—

"If it were lawful in the *Shari'at*, I would

have said, 'The King is Alexander and the Hakim, Aristotle'..."

Hakim Ahsan-Ullah Khan used to collect the necessary historical material and write in a rough manner for Ghalib who transformed it into Persian prose in his ornate style. The first part of *Mihr-i-Nimroz* was completed in 1852 (in which year Momin and 'Arif died—'Arif's death was a great shock to the poet) and was printed by order of the King in 1855. *Mihr-i-Nimroz* comprised the historical events under the Timurid Kings up to the death of Humayun. The other part which was to include the historical period from Akbar's accession to the days of Bahadur Shah II was never undertaken by the poet. It was proposed to be called *Mah-i-Nim-mah.*

Ghalib's closer associations with the Fort were pregnant with many changes in his literary efforts. As the King was himself a poet and wrote Urdu verse, Ghalib had to write Urdu *ghazals* to the taste of his patron. Owing to his preoccupation with *Mihr-i-Nimroz,* the poet's correspondence with his friends was now carried on in Urdu and in later years was published in the form of a book which increased the literary reputation of Ghalib. In 1855, the King confer-

red on Ghalib the honour of correcting his verses and the fact must have greatly enhanced his social prestige. During the period following 1850, his rivalry with Zauq became all the more acute and, in December, 1851, the presentation of *Sihra* to Prince Jawan Bakht, in the closing lines of which Ghalib had indulged in poetic licence, led to a literary duel between the two prominent poets at the court. But Ghalib was fully conscious of the adversity of the circumstances and the atmosphere in which he was passing his days He wrote to Nawab Sa'd-ud-Din Shafaq that it was only in response to the Prince and the Queen that he had undertaken to attempt the *Sihra* and was not interested in carrying on the conflict further. His only defence against his rival was :—

هر چه در گفتار فخر تست آن ننگ من است

"All that is pride for you in your speech, is an insult to me."

Since Ghalib's visit to Lucknow, he was anxious to establish his connection with the Kings of Oudh and, to this end, he wrote *Kasidas* to be presented at Lucknow (the first he wrote, was perhaps after November, 1832), but fortune did not favour him. The nobles at

Lucknow were blind to poetry and if there was appreciation at all, the intermediaries—Raushan-ud-Daula and one Munshi being dishonest, the money sent to the poet never reached him. It was in 1852 that Ghalib's *Kasidas* bore fruit, when Wajid Ali Shah's Government granted an allowance of rupees five hundred to the poet, but now the days of the kingdom of Oudh were numbered and in 1854 Wajid Ali Shah, the last King of Oudh, was sent to Calcutta as a State prisoner. The effect on Ghalib of the collapse of the Government of Oudh was to be compensated by his connections soon to be established with the Darbar of Rampur. Nawab Yusaf Ali Khan Nazim, of Rampur, came to Delhi in his younger days for study. The young Nawab in those days used to be taught Persian by Ghalib and the relations so established were further strengthened through the influence of Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq, who was a scholar of repute in his day and had been invited to Rampur by the Nawab. On Maulvi Sahib's request, Ghalib presented his *Diwan* and Persian *Kasida* to the Nawab Sahib who honoured the poet by appointing him his *Ustaz* and thenceforth looked after his worldly needs.

Political events in India were now under the shadow of the spirit of change and forbode a dismal future. The Fort of Delhi with its residents was faced with far-reaching changes. In 1854 very important decisions were made as to the removal of the Royal family and other allied important matters. Poor Ghalib, who was too old and enfeebled by his mode of life and circumstances, could not face the situation—not to say anything about his concern about the circumstances and forces around. He had caught a glimpse of the approaching tragedy. Thus he writes to a friend :—

"از شب عید خاقان رنجور است - حالا دیگر چه
رو نماید و من که در سایهٔ دیوارش غنوده ام
چه رود" -

"Since the 'Id night the King is ill—now what else would happen—and what would befall me who sleep in the shadow of his wall?"

The Royal master was in fact deserted by his courtiers ; even his close friends left him to his fate. When the terrific storm was at its height, the last of the Moghuls found himself all alone. The poet had seen that the wind was against the Moghuls; he, therefore, inclined towards the British and sent a Qasida to

Queen Victoria through Lord Canning with a request to the Empress to confer on him a suitable title and *Khal'at* as was the custom of the kings of Rum and Iran. The poet probably suggested that he should be graced with the title of "Queen's Poet". In the beginning of 1857, the officials informed him that his application would be disposed of after due enquiry. The poet was now looking forward to brighter days when the smoke of tragedy that was seen rising in the early fifties, enveloped Delhi in a dark cloud.



## CHAPTER VII

# 1857 AND AFTER

AFTER the death of the great Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir in 1707, the State affairs began to show signs of drifting towards a chaos. The successors of the great Emperor, the statesmen and military officers could not check the forces of disintegration which were slowly creeping into the Empire. There were kings and viziers—Shah Alams and I'tmad-ud-Daulas, but the political system defied their petty efforts. The Moghul soldiery was now a strange contrast to a handful of Mirzas and Begs who followed Babur (that most admirable of the Asiatic Princes) to India and established within a short space of time an Empire. The Moghuls were now retiring and had lost the essential will and force to control their circumstances—the ruling class was now facing social decay on an unprecedented scale. The story of the post-Moghul period forms a woeful chapter in world history.

After the days of Shah Alam II, the Empire presented the sight of a dying candle which lost

its last glow and flicker with the removal of Bahadur Shah II from the Fort of Delhi as a consequence of the Mutiny in 1857 :—

یا شب کو دیکھتے تھے کہ ھر گوشۂ بساط
دامان باغبان و کف گل فروش ھے
لطف خرام ساقی و ذوق صدائے چنگ
یہ جنت نگاہ وہ فردوس گوش ھے
یا صبحدم جو دیکھئے آکر تو بزم میں
نے وہ سرور و سوز نہ جوش و خروش ھے
داغ فراق صحبت شب کی جلی ھوئی
اک شمع رہ گئی ھے سو وہ بھی خموش ھے

It was—that we saw at night every corner of the carpet—
The skirt of the gardener and the palm of a flower-seller.
The joy of the gait of the Saki and the rapture of the cry of the lute
This—the Paradise of Sight and that—the Firdaus of the Ear!
And now, on coming early in the morning, we would see in the Assembly,
Neither that joy and rejoicing, nor that tumult and cry.
Burnt by the scar of separation of last night's gathering,
There remains a candle, and that even is dead!

A short account of the events during the Mutiny is given in one of Ghalib's own writings, *Dast-anbuy*, which is more or less a private diary of the poet, in which he used to record the daily events as were reported to him. The book is not of so great a value, a fact which can be inferred from a letter to one of the poet's friends. The letter runs :—

"I will send a copy (of *Dast-anbuy*) to the Nawab Governor-General Bahadur as a present and another copy will be sent through him to the Queen of England. Now, you can well imagine what would be its style—and why should the printers object to its printing ?"

Besides, *Dast-anbuy* was written by a person who seldom moved out of his house during the eventful days of the Mutiny, but still there is much which throws useful and sufficient light on contemporary events.

"The Mutiny broke out on May 11, 1857," says Ghalib, "when all of a sudden the walls and doors of the Fort and Delhi city were shaken and commotion overtook the earth. On that day, a few soldiers from amongst the vengeance-seeking army of Meerut entered the city.

All of them uncompromising and rebellious—thirsty for the blood of the English as well as of the wardens of the city..." While the army from Meerut marched to Delhi and disturbed the peace of the city by inciting the inflammable material to rise, there were, according to Ghalib, a few peaceably disposed citizens who confined themselves to the corners of their houses and had no connection with the rebellion. The poet refers to himself :—

"One of the sorrow-stricken was I who stuck to my house."

Terrific noise and news of the disturbance reached the poet, but he could not enquire into the matter. In the meantime, news came that the British Agent and the officers of the Fort were murdered, and the cavaliers and foot-men ran in all directions. The rebels, it is said, in their fury resorted to wholesale murder of the British, spilt blood to the extent that the earth was all blood. The cruelty of the Meerut soldiers to the British "fairy-faced women and rose-like children" greatly shocked the poet as is revealed by his feelings expressed in *Dast-anbuy*.

As the days passed, more insurgents rushed into Delhi and encamped in different places. The Fort and gardens were turned into stables and the King's chamber was used as a sleeping-room. The events in Delhi and around it were daily adding to the prevailing disorder. News of the murder of army officers from moffussil stations came pouring in. The peasants in villages rose in rebellion, joined hands with the soldiers and moved towards Delhi to claim their share in the spoils of the Imperial City. In the words of the poet, "The city was without a King and the people without a leader; the robbers were under no fear of arrest or prosecution : houses were laid waste...". The nobles of the city were facing a crisis ; the families of the *elite* found themselves in great helplessness and poverty. These unfortunate events led to a great social metamorphosis and the aristocratic families had to undergo tyrannies beyond description. Most of them were driven out of Delhi ; many of them moved to Qutub Sahib and its vicinity, and many wandered away, never to return.

Inside the city, the high class people passed

their days in unthinkable poverty; their valuables and property had been looted and there was nothing left to wear or spread underneath to sleep on. On the other hand, the mob saw in those dark days of Delhi the appearance of a glorious dawn as it would mean a change in their destiny.

Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul King, was asked by the insurgents to be their leader, but according to Ghalib, they came round him as a halo round the moon. At last the insurgents came into conflict with the British forces and were driven away when the British attacked Kashmiri Gate. Now that the British forces had captured the city, wholesale arrests and murder were still the order of the day. The inhabitants of the city closed their doors in panic. The insurgents were hovering around Ajmeri, Turkoman and Delhi Gates. The British being infuriated, resorted to extreme martial measures—people were killed and houses were set on fire. In great confusion and panic, the inhabitants of the city began to leave their houses and moved out of the four walls of the city.

During these stormy days, Ghalib quietly sat in his house waiting for the storm to pass over. In an atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty, he writes :—

"I said, when I have done no wrong, I would not deserve any reproach. Neither the English kill the innocent, nor is the climate of the city unpleasant. How does it concern me that I should throw myself into thoughts (fears) of destruction and, falling and rising, take the way (out)......"

On September 18, 1857, the city and the Fort passed into the hands of the British. After that, Ghalib writes, his lane also had come under the dark shadow of the Mutiny and the noise of 'strike and kill' reached it. The residents of the houses, as they were in a state of fear, closed their doors against outsiders. During these days, the city presented a deserted view. The bazaars were closed. There was little to eat and less to drink. The poet in such conditions was forced to sell his clothes to get something to eat. He had no clothes except those of daily use. He, therefore, once wrote :—

"You would say, others eat bread, I eat clothes!"

Those days were terrible. No one could move about freely in the streets and only few could venture out to fetch water. It was, somehow, under the protection of the Maharaja of Patiala's men who were posted near the house of the Hakim family, that Ghalib's servants once moved out to fetch water. As they could not go out far away to the well of sweet water, they only returned with salt water. The poet, as he writes, passed his days as if he were a prisoner. No one came to talk to him, nor did he go out to see things for himself Certainly, he could speak of himself "My ears are deaf and my eyes are blind." One day when there was great scarcity of water, a shower of rain fell, and Ghalib managed to collect water in a vessel by spreading a piece of cloth over it. Thus he says :—

"This time the merciful cloud brought water from the fountain of life and surely what Alexander sought in his kingdom and did not find, this (Ghalib), with a bitter palate and given to drinking salt-water, found in a desert."

It appears that, owing to the presence of

Patiala's soldiers, the house of Ghalib remained safe, but the jewellery and other valuables that Begum Ghalib had secretly sent to Kalai Shah's house for safe deposit, were dug out by the victorious forces. When the secret was disclosed to Ghalib, it was too late and he consoled himself with the idea that "as it was to go, it did not go from his house."

*Dast-anbuy* describes an incident which occurred on October 5, and it must have caused great anxiety to Ghalib. Some English soldiers jumped over the wall and entered Ghalib's lane and, ignoring other houses, turned their attention to the poet's residence. They did not touch his property but took 'Arif's two sons and a few neighbours to Col. Browne, where after a bit of enquiry, Ghalib was allowed to return to his house that very day. Another version is that a certain friend of the poet had approached the Colonel and, owing to his timely intervention, the poet was let off.

During those days of social upheaval, one can easily imagine the state of the poet's domestic affairs. His brother, Mirza Yusaf, had been suffering for a long time from mental derangement. He resided in a house at a considerable

distance from that of Ghalib. He had a wife and children, but, it seems that during those troublous days, his wife and children had deserted him under pressure of circumstances and in his house there remained only a couple of old servants—a woman servant and a *darban.* Ghalib came to know of all this, but, under the shadow of the Mutiny, he could do nothing practical for his dearly beloved brother. The poet was always thinking as to how his brother passed the night and what he ate in the day, but he knew so little about him that he could not say whether "he was alive, or, had died of hardship."

Nawab Mo'in-ud-Din, who was related to Ghalib, writes in his account of the Mutiny that Mirza Yusuf, who was of unsound mind, came out of his house on hearing the noise of gun-fire and was killed, but, according to Ghalib, the old *darban* of Mirza Yusuf brought the news on the morning of October 19, that the Mirza had died the previous night after five days' continuous illness. Mirza Ghalib was now facing a double tragedy. Circumstanced as he was, the funeral of Yusuf required so

many things to be done which lay beyond Ghalib's power. But his neighbours showed great sympathy towards him ; they took two or three *chadars* with them to use as a shroud for the corpse and buried Yusuf close to a mosque.

After the fall of Delhi, for some months the balance turned in the other direction and resort was had to force "to lay the dust of disturbance" :—

چوک جس کو کہیں وہ مقتل ہے
گھر نمونہ سا ہے زندان کا

What they call Chowk is a death-haunt ;
The house is comparable to a prison !

The poet passed his days and nights in constant anxiety and unrest. People carried news about one another to the officers and as a consequence, many arrests were made. On February 2, the officer in charge of the city took into custody Hakim Mahmud Khan with sixty other people. Fortunately, the Hakim Sahib and a few other dignitaries were released after three days. Ghalib and many other prominent people of Delhi had sought the protection of the Hakim Sahib who used his influence to save

those against whom complaints were made.

Most of Ghalib's friends and relatives suffered greatly as a result of the Mutiny. On the day of the fall of Delhi, Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Nawab Amin-ud-Din thought of going to Lahore with their families, but they had not yet reached Mihr-i-Wali when robbers surrounded them and took away everything except their apparel. Their houses in Delhi were plundered and buildings were rased to the ground. Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Husain Mirza had to face great odds; the destruction of their houses is all the more lamentable as they used to collect Ghalib's manuscripts of Urdu and Persian prose and poetry which perished with their houses.

A few days after, five other chiefs (Jagirdars) of the dependencies of Delhi were put under arrest. Many nobles fled from Delhi with their families. Their houses were searched and looted; valuables were carried away and the houses were burnt. Some of the princes were shot dead; others were hanged. Out of those who remained, some were thrown into the

prison-house and some sought safety in flight, never to return. Against the unfortunate King who was keeping indifferent health, a case by way of enquiry was instituted. The Muslim population of Delhi was the target of all kinds of atrocities and, according to the estimate of Ghalib, there were only about a thousand souls left in the city during a period of five months' constant disturbance and Ghalib was one of them. Most of the Muslims had gone out to the suburbs of Delhi where they had to encounter untold miseries.

In December, 1857, and January, 1858, it appears that the people were under pressure of official high-handedness and it was difficult for the citizens to communicate with one another. Thus Ghalib writes: "I put it to you, if I were to write, what should I write? Can I write, or, is there anything to write? What is all that you have written? What is that I write now? It is (all) that up till now we are alive. Any thing besides, neither you would write nor I."

In another letter :—

"......But can write nothing; if we happen

to meet again, we would say—otherwise, *inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un.*"

The awe-inspiring series of events that were taking place around Ghalib made him think, and think in a different line. His inclination carried him to the extent of wholly dis-associating himself from the Fort lest he should be involved in difficulties with the Royal family (possibly share their fate). Bahadur Shah, however, met the tragedy like a brave man. He was to be transported to Rangoon where he passed his last days and never forgot his dignity. It is said that the Queen was a source of infinite source of inspiration and courage to the Shah in exile. The Royal couple passed their days in complete resignation and maintained their social status by selling the most valuable diamonds and pearls that had passed to them from the great Moghul dynasty as a legacy. Ghalib refers to himself in one of his letters (written during these days) as a humble poet who had only undertaken the task of writing history and correcting verse which could be looked upon either as service or labour.

Among the various limitations that were

imposed upon Ghalib, a very serious one was the lack of wine which continued to destroy his peace of mind up to December, 1858. He says in a letter :—

"There is no place to go (to) ; there is none to come to me. That *'araq*, which kept up the required energy, is not available."

On the first of November, 1858, a Declaration of General Amnesty was issued and the occasion was celebrated by a *chiraghan* in Delhi. The poet also took part in the celebrations.

Many of Ghalib's friends lost their lives during the Mutiny and their loss was keenly felt by Ghalib. Among the contemporary men of letters who were intimately known to Ghalib were Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq Khairabadi, Mufti Sadr-ud-Din Azurda and Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta. After the Mutiny Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq was accused of having rendered help to the insurgents and was sentenced to transportation for life to the Andamans. A case was instituted against Mufti Sadr-ud-Din Azurda. The Mufti Sahib's life was, however, saved. Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta, the author of *Gulshan-i-Baikhar*, who is reputed for his simplicity and purity of style,

was also accused of having given help to the insurgents and was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. In January, 1859, however, he was granted pardon.

During the Mutiny, the economic condition of Ghalib had descended to its lowest ebb and his sources of income had been unavoidably closed. The payment of the fifty rupees he used to receive from the Fort and the annual sum of seven hundred and fifty rupees—his family pension, came to a stop forthwith, owing to the tumultuous state of affairs in Delhi. Bahadur Shah had his own worries. British administration had been upset by the unexpected fiery insurrection that had its beginning in Meerut and shortly engulfed Delhi in its flames. After conditions had reverted to a normal state, Ghalib was accused of having sympathy with the rebel soldiers and as a consequence his pension was suspended. Ghalib did not receive his pension for three years. Fortune favoured him in May, 1860, when he received the full sum due on account of his pension; but it was, however, some years later that his request for *Khil'at* was favourably considered. In July, 1859, Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan

granted him a monthly allowance of a hundred rupees, but the sum was not sufficient to meet his liabilities and domestic needs.

Hearing the news of Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta's release, who had been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, but was later found innocent, Ghalib undertook a journey to Meerut in January, 1859, in order to see the Nawab Sahib who had been so kind to him in his adverse circumstances.

The suspension of Ghalib's pension was the cause of his writing many *Kasidas* to higher officials—one was sent to Queen Victoria. On March 17, 1858, the Commissioner of Delhi wrote back to Ghalib that it contained nothing but praise. A few months after, *Dastanbuy* was printed and the poet sent a few copies (perhaps to please the authorities) to England and presented a few to the officials in India, but, Ghalib was still under the shadow of official suspicion. He was not invited to the Darbar held at Meerut in 1860, and still greater disappointment must have been caused by the return of the *Kasida* written to Lord Canning, with the remarks—"such things should not be sent to us any further."

In January, 1860, Ghalib paid a visit to Rampur probably to seek the Nawab's intervention in his pension case. The Nawab welcomed the poet with all the friendly conventions and, by way of appreciation of the poet's learning and art, granted him a monthly allowance of Rs. 200 during the poet's stay at Rampur, and one hundred rupees in case he stayed in Delhi. But, as Ghalib had taken along with him 'Arif's two children, he shortly returned to Delhi (in March) when he received his pension that was due.

The criticism of *Burhan-i-Qati'*—the well-known Persian dictionary compiled by Maulvi Muhammad Husain, of the Deccan—which took the shape of *Qati'*-i-*Burhan* early in 1859 and was published in 1861 (later called *Dirafsh-i-Kaviani*), gave rise to bitter resentment on the part of a certain section of Indian scholars. Ghalib, as a reading of *Mihr-i-Nimroz* and *Dast-anbuy* shows, was given to writing classical Persian with Dasatirish vocabulary, to the exclusion of Arabic words. His peculiar aptitude for writing chaste, but archaic, Persian and his vast study enabled him to find fault with the Maulvi's dictionary; but in his zeal

for criticism, the poet rather went out of his way to criticise the Maulvi himself. A storm of protest rose against Ghalib's attitude and his criticism, which almost bewildered Ghalib and his friends. The criticism, owing to its pungency, with all its value, made the poet's life for sometime very unpleasant.



CHAPTER VIII

# THE POET'S DECLINING YEARS

FROM 1860 onwards, Ghalib's health was failing, as his letters show, and during his declining years, physical ailments robbed him of his peace of mind in his old age. Mental weakness and dizziness would not allow him to correct the verses sent to him for *Islah*. On the occasion of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan's succession, 1865, Ghalib went to Rampur with the young Mirzas—Baqir Ali Khan and Husain Ali Khan. The poet stayed there for three months. On his way back to Delhi, he fell ill in Muradabad, where Sir Syed Ahmad Khan looked after his comfort (Sir Syed was then Sadr-us-Sudur there). After a few days, the poet recovered his health and made his way to Delhi. Although he now gained temporary relief, his health was giving way. In a letter dated, May 12, 1866, he says :—

> "I was weak before, I am now half dead ;
> I was dead before, I shall be soon blind ."

It seems Ghalib was getting tired of life as he wrote :—

خرم آں روز کزیں منزل ویراں گزرم

Happy is the day when I shall pass this deserted *Manzil !*

And it is not difficult to imagine why he exclaimed :—

اے مرگ ناگہاں تجھے کیا انتظار ہے؟

O imminent Death ! what awaiteth thou ?

During the last few years, the poet was too weak mentally and physically to attempt serious verse. Probably he wrote his last Persian *Ghazal* in 1865, in response to Nawab Amin-ud-Din's request and his last Urdu *Ghazal* in 1866, at the request of Mirza ʿAla-ud-Din (the Nawab's son). Even during his illness, the poet carried on correspondence with his friends and was conscious of the value of his friendly communications. *ʿUd-i.Hindi* (a collection of the poet's letters) was published in October, 1868, but *Urdu-i-Muʿalla* was not destined to see the light of day during the poet's life-time.

For some years before the end had drawn near, it had become almost impossible for the

poet, says Hali, to move about freely. He was usually confined to his bed and took little food. Khawaja 'Aziz-ud-Din 'Aziz, of Lucknow, has left a descriptive sketch of the poet's condition in which he saw the great artist, when he stopped at Delhi, on his way to Kashmir. Says the Khawaja :—

"Mirza Ghalib's house was made of *pucka* bricks. It had a big gate adjoining which there was a room and in that room was a *charpai* ; on it was lying an old man of about eighty or eighty-two, with a fragile, emaciated body ; he had a book on his breast which he was reading—his eyes probing into it : this was Mirza Ghalib who was probably glancing through the *Diwan* of Qa'ani.

We salaamed him, but he was so deaf that our voice did not reach his ear. We then thought of returning presently ; in the mean-time Ghalib raised himself with the help of a side bar of the *charpai* and looked towards us. We salaamed him again; with great difficulty he descended from the *charpai* and sat on the carpet, asked us to sit by him and placed the inkstand and paper before us, saying :—

'I can see a little with my eyes, but, I

cannot hear with my ears. 'All that I ask—please write down its answer......!' During the conversation, the poet ordered his servant to bring his meal and the Khawaja, to avoid disturbance to the old poet, begged leave of him, but they were politely asked to wait and a feeble voice was heard, : 'You took the trouble perhaps to see me. That is very kind of you ! Did you notice my weakness, it is difficult for me to move about ; did you see the condition of my sight, I do not recognise a man ; did you mark my hearing capacity, although one may shout as loudly as possible; I cannot hear ; you have noticed my mode of reciting a *Ghazal*—you have listened to my *kalam*. There is one thing left—what I eat and how much I eat ; please note before going away.' In the meantime, the meal was brought which consisted of two light loaves, a small quantity of roasted meat in a tray, and also some fruit. The poet had hardly taken two morsels when he finished his meal. We wondered how the old man lived on such a small quantity of food."

A few days before his death, the poet lost consciousness, but occassionally recovered his

senses. Hali visited the poet the day before his death when he was feeling a little better. He was then dictating a letter to Nawab 'Ala-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. The Nawab had enquired after the poet's health from Loharu. The poet dictated :—

> "What do you ask me about my condition ?
> —You might enquire from my neighbours
> in a day or so ........................."

During his last days as the end was drawing near, the poet was often heard reciting his pathetic verse with subdued breath :—

دم واپسیں بر سر راہ ہے
عزیزو اب اللہ ہی اللہ ہے

The last breath is now on its way—,

Dear ones ! Eternal is the glory of Allah !

Ghalib breathed his last on February 15, 1869. "Till the dawn appears and shadows flee !" Funeral arrangements were made under the supervision of Nawab Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and the poet was buried in the vicinity of Sheikh Nizam-ud-Din's tomb, close to Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan Ma'ruf's grave.

*INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAJI'UN.*

# PART II

# SELECTED TRANSLATIONS
OF
# THE ODES OF GHALIB





# THE ODES OF GHALIB

نقش فریادی ھے کس کی شوخی تحریر کا
کاغذی ھے پیرھن ھر پیکر تصویر کا

Against whose artful writing does the Painting utter a plaintive cry?

The form of every picture wears a paper-attire.

کاو کاو سخت جانی ھائے تنہائی نہ پوچھ
صبح کرنا شام کا لانا ھے جوئے شیر کا

Ask not about the diligence of my hard-heartedness in solitude,

To turn the Evening into Morning is to dig the Canal of Milk!

آگہی دام شنیدن جس قدر چاھے بچھائے
مدعا عنقا ھے اپنے عالم تقریر کا

Cognizance may spread its net of hearing to any extent,

The Phoenix is the object of our Universe of Speech.

بسکہ ہوں غالب اسیری میں بھی آتش زیر پا
موئے آتش دیدہ ہے حلقہ مری زنجیر کا

O Ghalib ! Whereas even in captivity I have
my feet on fire,
The ring of my chain is a hair that hath seen fire!

جز قیس اور کوئی نہ آیا بروئے کار
صحرا مگر بہ تنگی چشم حسود تھا

Did none other than Qais come to face the task
(Love) ?
The desert was perhaps as narrow as the eyes
of the envious !

آشفتگی نے نقش سویدا کیا درست
ظاہر ہوا کہ داغ کا سرمایہ دود تھا

Perturbation set the black mole of the heart
right ;
Thus it came to light that smoke was the
wealth of the scar.

تھا خواب میں خیال کو تجھ سے معاملہ
جب آنکھ کھل گئی نہ زیاں تھا نہ سود تھا

In the dream, Fancy had its dealing with
thee ;
When the eye opened, there was neither loss,
nor gain !

لیتا ہوں مکتب غم دل میں سبق ہنوز
لیکن یہی کہ رفت گیا اور بود تھا

Still I am learning lessons in the school of the grief of the heart,

But it is only this : that (*raft*) went and (*bud*) was.

ڈھانپا کفن نے داغ عیوب برہنگی
میں ورنہ ہر لباس میں ننگ وجود تھا

The shroud covered the scar of the defects of Nudity,

I was, otherwise, in every attire a disgrace to Existence !

تیشے بغیر مر نہ سکا کوہکن اسد
سرگشتۂ خمار رسوم و قیود تھا

Asad ! Farhad, the mountain-digger, could not die without an adze ;

He was only intoxicated with (the wine of) customs and conventions.

کہتے ہو نہ دینگے ہم دل اگر پڑا پایا
دل کہاں کہ گم کیجئے ہم نے مدعا پایا

You say that you would not hand over the heart, if found lying ;

Where is the heart that we lose ? We have gained your object !

عشق سے طبیعت نے زیست کا مزا پایا
درد کی دوا پائی درد بے دوا پایا

Through love the mind was able to relish life;
We found a remedy for the pain—a pain without a remedy.

دوستدار دشمن ہے اعتماد دل معلوم
آہ بے اثر دیکھی نالہ نارسا پایا

It is friendly towards the foe, can't rely on the Heart—
The sigh has proved without effect and the cry of little avail.

سادگی و پرکاری بیخودی و ہشیاری
حسن کو تغافل میں جرأت آزما پایا

Simplicity, skilfulness, ecstacy and wakefulness—
Beauty, in its languor, has been found testing the (lover's) daring.

غنچہ پھر لگا کھلنے آج ہم نے اپنا دل
خوں کیا ہوا دیکھا گم کیا ہوا پایا

The bud is going to blossom again; to-day we saw
Our heart turned into blood—having lost it, found it.

حال دل نہیں معلوم لیکن اس قدر یعنی
ہم نے بارہا ڈھونڈھا تمنے بارہا پایا

The condition of the heart is not known, but only that
We searched for it many a time—you found it many a time.

دل مرا سوز نہاں سے بے محابا جل گیا
آتش خاموش کی مانند گویا جل گیا

My heart has been openly consumed by the inner burning;
Like a silent fire, one would say, it has been (completely) burnt.

دل میں ذوق وصل و یاد یار تک باقی نہیں
آگ اس گھر میں لگی ایسی کہ جو تھا جل گیا

In the heart there remains not even the desire for union, nor the Friend's memory;
This house caught such a fire that it burned all therein.

میں عدم سے بھی پرے ہوں ورنہ غافل بارہا
میری آہ آتشیں سے بال عنقا جل گیا

I am beyond Non-existence; otherwise, O unmindful! many times,
The wing of the Phoenix caught fire from my fiery sigh.

عرض کیجے جوہر اندیشہ کی گرمی کہاں
کچھ خیال آیا تھا وحشت کا کہ صحرا جل گیا

Where am I to present the heat of the essence of thought?
With the mere thought of wildness, the *Sahara* has become all ashes.

دل نہیں تجھ کو دکھاتا ورنہ داغوں کی بہار
اس چراغاں کا کروں کیا کارفرما جل گیا

My heart—I do not show you, otherwise, the spring of scars—
This Illumination, alas! has lost its ordainer in fire!

زخم نے داد نہ دی تنگی دل کی یا رب
تیر بھی سینۂ بسمل سے پرافشاں نکلا

The wound did not do justice to the heart, O God!
Even the arrow came out fluttering from the wounded breast.

بوئے گل، نالۂ دل، دود چراغ محفل
جو تری بزم سے نکلا سو پریشاں نکلا

The fragrance of the flower, the cry of the heart and the smoke of the candle of the Assembly—
Whoever came out of thy Assembly, came out perplexed.

تھی نوآموز فنا ہمت دشوار پسند
سخت مشکل ہے کہ یہ کام بھی آساں نکلا

My enterprising spirit was apprenticed in the first stage of Mortality ;
A great difficulty, even this task has proved so easy !

دل میں پھر گریہ نے اک شور اٹھایا غالب
آہ جو قطرہ نہ نکلا تھا سو طوفاں نکلا

In the heart, Lamentation has again created tumult, O Ghalib !
Alas ! the drop that did not emerge (as a tear), appeared as a storm.

دھمکی میں مر گیا جو نہ باب نبرد تھا
عشق نبرد پیشہ طلبگار مرد تھا

He, who was not equal to the engagement, died of threat,
The adventurous Love asked for the brave to come forth.

تھا زندگی میں مرگ کا کھٹکا لگا ہوا
اڑنے سے پیشتر بھی مرا رنگ زرد تھا

In life-time, there was always the peril of Death,
Even before death my complexion was pale, (Ah me !)

تالیف نسخہ ہائے وفا کر رہا تھا میں
مجموعۂ خیال ابھی فرد فرد تھا

I was (busy) compiling the treatises of Fidelity (while)
The compendium of (my) thought was yet scattered in pieces.

دل تا جگر کہ ساحل دریائے خوں ہے اب
اس رہگزر میں جلوۂ گل آگے گرد تھا

From the heart to the liver, there is now the bank of the river of blood,
In the past, the splendour of the flower was but dust in this path.

جاتی ہے کوئی کشمکش اندوہ عشق کی
دل بھی اگر گیا تو وہی دل کا درد تھا

In no case ends the struggle of the grief of Love;
Even if the heart was gone, there was the grief of the heart.

یہ لاش بے کفن اسد خستہ جاں کی ہے
حق مغفرت کرے عجب آزاد مرد تھا

This corpse without a shroud is—of the broken-hearted Asad;
God have mercy on him—He was a wonderful freeman!

بہ فیض بے دلی نومیدیٔ جاوید آساں ہے
کشائش کو ہمارا عقدۂ مشکل پسند آیا

Owing to the munificence of heartlessness, eternal despair is easy;
Opening has liked the insolubility of our difficult knot.

ہوائے سیر گل آئینۂ بے مہری قاتل
کہ انداز بخوں غلطیدن بسمل پسند آیا

The desire for a stroll amidst flowers is the mirror of the Assassin's inhumanity;
It interests her (to see) the wounded lover's rolling in blood.

سبزۂ خط سے ترا کاکل سرکش نہ دبا
یہ زمرد بھی حریف دم افعی نہ ہوا

Thy rebellious lock has not been subdued by thy *dawn*;
Even *this* emerald has not proved a rival to the viper's breath!

میں نے چاہا تھا کہ اندوہ وفا سے چھوٹوں
وہ ستمگر مرے مرنے پہ بھی راضی نہ ہوا

I had wished to free myself from the grief of faithfulness;
The cruel beloved was not pleased even with my being dead.

دل گزرگاہ خیال مے و ساغر ہی سہی
گر نفس جادۂ سر منزل تقوی نہ ہوا

Let the heart be a passage for the thought of wine and cup,
If the breath has not been the high-way of the destination of purity !

ہوں ترے وعدہ نہ کرنے میں بھی راضی کہ کبھی
گوش منت کش گلبانگ تسلی نہ ہوا

I am content even if thou dost not make a promise,
My ear has never been under the obligation of consolatory words.

ستائش گر ہے زاہد اس قدر جس باغ رضواں کا
وہ اک گلدستہ ہے ہم بیخودوں کے طاق نسیاں کا

The garden of Ridhwan, which the ascetic praises so much,
Is but a bouquet of our (wine-bibbers') *niche* of oblivion.

نہ آئی سطوت قاتل بھی مانع میرے نالوں کو
لیا دانتوں میں جو تنکا ہوا ریشہ نیستاں کا

The awe of the Assassin did not check my cries,
Any straw that came under my teeth became a fibre of the reed-forest.

دکھاؤں گا تماشہ دی اگر فرصت زمانہ نے
مرا ہر داغ دل اک تخم ہے سرو چراغاں کا

I will show the *tamasha*, if time permits me—
Every scar of my heart is the seed of the cypress of Illumination.

کیا آئینہ خانہ کا وہ نقشہ تیرے جلوہ نے
کرے جو پرتو خورشید عالم شبنمستاں کا

Thy splendour has brought the same change in the mirror-house,
As the dazzling light of the sun brings in a dew-abode.

مری تعمیر میں مضمر ہے اک صورت خرابی کی
ہیولا برق خرمن کا ہے خون گرم دہقاں کا

In my structure there lies concealed a phase of ruin;
The *Heyula* of the lightning of the harvest is the hot blood of the peasant.

خموشی میں نہاں خوں گشتہ لاکھوں آرزوئیں ہیں
چراغ مردہ ہوں میں بے زباں گور غریباں کا

In my silence are hidden millions of desires, turned into blood—
I am an extinguished candle, mute, at a stranger's grave!

هنوز اک پرتو نقش خیال یار باقی هے
دل افسرده گویا حجره هے یوسف کے زنداں کا

Still there is a ray of the picture of my Friend's thought;
The sad heart is, in a way, a cell in Joseph's prison.

بغل میں غیر کی آج آپ سوئے هیں کہیں ورنه
سبب کیا خواب میں آکر تبسم هائے پنہاں کا

Thou hast slept by the side of a stranger somewhere, otherwise,
What is the cause of stealthy smiles, when thou appearest in my dream?

محبت تهی چمن سے لیکن اب یه بے دماغی هے
که موج بوئے گل سے ناک میں آتا هے دم میرا

I had an attachment to the garden, but now I have no heart for it—
Now, even the wave of the fragrance of the flower disturbs me.

سراپا رهن عشق و ناگزیر الفت هستی
عبادت برق کی کرتا هوں اور افسوس حاصل کا

I am wholly pledged to Love, and under compulsion attached to Existence—
I am worshipping Lightning, and am sorrowful for the product.

محرم نہیں ہے تو ہی نواہائے راز کا
یاں ورنہ جو حجاب ہے پردہ ہے ساز کا

Only thou art not the spouse of the voices of the Secret;
Otherwise, here what is a veil is the fret of a musical instrument.

صرفہ ہے ضبط آہ میں میرا وگرنہ میں
طعمہ ہوں ایک ہی نفس جاں گداز کا

The restraint of my sigh is to my own advantage, otherwise, I
Am only one morsel of the soul-melting breath.

کاوش کا دل کرے ہے تقاضا کہ ہے ہنوز
ناخن پہ قرض اس گرہ نیم باز کا

The heart (further) demands digging (effort), as if still
The nail owes debt to this half-open knot.

گرچہ ہوں دیوانہ پر کیوں دوست کا کھاؤں فریب
آستیں میں دشنہ پنہاں ہاتھ میں نشتر کھلا

Although I am mad, but, why should I be deceived by (my) friend ?
She holds hidden in her sleeve a dagger, openly a lance in her hand.

گو نہ سمجھوں اس کی باتیں گو نہ پاؤں اسکا بھید
پر یہ کیا کم ہے کہ مجھ سے وہ پری پیکر کھلا

Although I may not follow her talk, nor may discover her secret,
Yet, is it of little importance that the fairy-faced one became free with me?

ایک ایک قطرہ کا مجھے دینا پڑا حساب
خون جگر ودیعت مژگان یار تھا

I had to render account for each drop,
The blood of the liver was a trust of the eyelashes.

اب میں ہوں اور ماتم یک شہر آرزو
توڑا جو تو نے آئینہ تمثال دار تھا

Now it is—I and the mourning for a whole city of longings—
The mirror (heart), which thou hast broken, was full of paintings.

گلیوں میں میری لاش کو کھینچے پھرو کہ میں
جاں دادۂ ہوائے سر رہ گزار تھا

Now, drag about my corpse in the streets, for, I
Had devoted my soul to the wayside breeze!

بسکہ دشوار ہے ہر کام کا آساں ہونا
آدمی کو بھی میسر نہیں انساں ہونا

Whereas it is difficult for every task to be easy,
Even man is not able to be Man, (Alas !)

گریہ چاہے ہے خرابی مرے کاشانے کی
در و دیوار سے ٹپکے ہے بیاباں ہونا

Lamentation desires the desolation of my abode,
The doors and walls point to my house being a desert.

لے گئے خاک میں ہم داغ تمنائے نشاط
تو ہو اور آپ بصد رنگ گلستاں ہونا

We carried (with us) under dust the scar of the longing for joy—
Be thou and ourselves—a rose-garden in a hundred colours !

کی مرے قتل کے بعد اس نے جفا سے توبہ
ہائے اس زود پشیماں کا پشیماں ہونا

After my assassination, she repented of cruelty ;
Oh, the regret of that repentant-in-haste !

حیف اُس جار گرہ کبڑے کی قسمت غالب
جس کی قسمت مین هو عاشق کا گریباں هونا

Ah, the fate of that four *girih* piece of cloth, O Ghalib!
Which is destined to be a lover's collar!

یک قدم وحشت سے درس، دفتر امکاں کھلا
جادہ اجزائے دو عالم دشت کا شیرازہ تھا

A step into the wilderness revealed the lesson of the Book of Existence:
The path was the binding link of the particles of the two worlds' desert.

مانع وحشت خرامی هائے لیلی کون هے
خانۂ مجنون صحرا گرد بے دروازہ تھا

Who is there to come in the way of Leila's wild walks?
The house of Majnun, the wanderer of the desert, is without a door.

پوچھ مت رسوائی انداز استغنائے حسن
دست مرهون حنا رخسار رهن غازہ تھا

Ask not about the humiliation of the manner of Beauty's independence—
Hands, consigned to *henna*: the cheeks, mortgaged to perfumed powder!

دوست غمخواری میں میری سعی فرمائیں گے کیا
زخم کے بھرنے تلک ناخن نہ بڑھ آئیں گے کیا

What would be the result of my friends' efforts
—to sympathise with me?
Till the wound heals, will not (my) nails have
grown?

بے نیازی حد سے گزری بندہ پرور کب تلک
ہم کہیں گے حال دل اور آپ فرمائیں گے کیا

Indifference has passed its limit, O Mistress,
how long
Shall we describe the condition of our heart
and thou shalt say, "What?"

حضرت ناصح گر آئیں دیدہ و دل فرش راہ
کوئی مجھ کو یہ تو سمجھا دو کہ سمجھائیں گے کیا

If the Adviser comes, (my) eye and heart be
the floor of his path!
Let me understand as to what he is going to
make me understand.

آج واں تیغ و کفن باندھے ہوئے جاتا ہوں میں
عذر میرے قتل کرنے میں وہ اب لائیں گے کیا

I am going there to-day, with a sword and
shroud;
What excuse will she put forth now to forego
my assassination?

گر کیا ناصح نے ہم کو قید اچھا یوں سہی
یہ جنون عشق کے انداز چھٹ جائیں گے کیا

If the Adviser has imprisoned *us*, let it be so;
But, will these manners of madness of love go?

خانہ زاد زلف ہیں زنجیر سے بھاگیں گے کیوں
ہیں گرفتار وفا زنداں سے گھبرائیں گے کیا

We are the born-slaves of thy lock, why run away from the chain?
We are bound by faithfulness, why be confounded in prison?

ہے اب اس معمورہ میں قحط غم الفت اسد
ہم نے یہ مانا کہ دلی میں رہیں کھائیں گے کیا

O Asad! in this city there is now famine of the grief of love;
We admit that we should live in Delhi, but what to eat?

یہ نہ تھی ہماری قسمت کہ وصال یار ہوتا
اگر اور جیتے رہتے یہی انتظار ہوتا

It was not our destiny to enjoy our meeting with the Friend;
If we had lived more, we would have waited for the same!

ترے وعدہ پر جئے هم تو یہ جان جھوٹ جانا
کہ خوشی سے مر نہ جاتے اگر اعتبار هوتا

If we lived on thy promise, know that we had known it false—
For, should we not have died of joy, if we could believe?

غم اگرچہ جاں گسل هے پہ کہاں بچیں کہ دل هے
غم عشق گر نہ هوتا غم روزگار هوتا

Although grief is soul-breaking, but how is the heart to escape?
If there were no grief of love, there would have been worldly grief.

کہوں کس سے میں کہ کیا هے شب غم بری بلا هے
مجھے کیا برا تھا مرنا اگر ایک بار هوتا

To whom should I say what the night of grief is? It is a trial—
Dying was nothing bad for me, if it were but once!

هوئے مر کے هم جو رسوا هوئے کیوں نہ غرق دریا
نہ کبھی جنازہ اٹھتا نہ کہیں مزار هوتا

We have been humiliated by being dead—why were we not drowned in a river?
There would have been neither a funeral procession, nor a grave!

ہوس کو ہے نشاط کار کیا کیا
نہ ہو مرنا تو جینے کا مزا کیا

How numerous are the ways in which Desire seeks pleasure, indeed!
If there be no death, what would be the attraction of life?

فروغ شعلۂ خس یک نفس ہے
ہوس کو پاس ناموس وفا کیا

The light of the flame of the straw is but for a moment—
What regard has lust for the dignity of Faith?

نفس موج محیط بیخودی ہے
تغافل ہائے ساقی کا گلا کیا

The breath is (now) a wave of the ocean of trance—
To complain against the inattention of the Saki—(who) and what?

دماغ عطر پیراہن نہیں ہے
غم آوارگی ہائے صبا کیا

(I) have no heart for the ottar of the mantle (of the beloved),
What anxiety can there be about the wanderings of the zephyr?

دل هر قطره هے ساز انا البحر
هم اس کے هیں همارا پوچهنا کیا

The heart of every drop is a musical instrument of "I am the Ocean!"
We are His, one need not ask about us!

محابا کیا هے میں ضامن ادهر دیکهه
شهیدان نگه کا خوں بها کیا

What is the obstacle? I am responsible, look this side!
There is no blood-money for the martyrs of (thy) glance.

سن اے غارتگر جنس وفا سن
شکست قیمت دل کی صدا کیا

Hear, O destroyer of the commodity of Faith, hear!
What is the sound of the "breaking" of the price of (my) heart?

بندگی میں بهی وه آزاده و خود بیں هیں که هم
الٹے پهر آئے در کعبه اگر وا نه هوا

Even in devotion we are so free and self-respecting that we
Retraced our footsteps, if the door of the Kaaba was not opened.

سینہ کا داغ ہے وہ نالہ کہ لب تک نہ گیا
خاک کا رزق ہے وہ قطرہ کہ دریا نہ ہوا

The cry that did not reach the lip is the scar of the breast:
The drop that did not become a river is the subsistence of dust.

نام کا میرے ہے وہ دکھ کہ کسی کو نہ ملا
کام میں میرے ہے وہ فتنہ کہ برپا نہ ہوا

There is suffering in store for me which none has seen:
Mischief is after me which has never appeared.

زکات حسن دے اے جلوۂ بینش کہ مہر آسا
چراغ خانۂ درویش ہو کاسہ گدائی کا

Give alms out of thy beauty, O splendour of vision! so that like the sun,
The beggar's bowl may become the candle of the Dervish's abode!

وہی اک بات ہے جو یاں نفس واں نکہت گل ہے
چمن کا جلوہ باعث ہے مری رنگیں نوائی کا

It is the same thing—what is breath here is the perfume of the flower there—
The splendour of the garden is the cause of my colourful songs.

سب کے دل میں ہے جگہ تیری جو تو راضی ہوا
مجھ پہ گویا اک زمانہ مہرباں ہو جائے گا

Thou hast attraction for every heart, if thou be pleased with me,
One might say, a world would be kind to me,

باغ میں مجھکو نہ لے جا ورنہ میرے حال پر
ہرگل تر ایک چشم خوں فشاں ہو جائے گا

Take me not to the garden, otherwise, at my sight
Every bedewed flower would become a blood-sprinkling eye.

درد منت کش دوا نہ ہوا
میں نہ اچھا ہوا برا نہ ہوا

Pain did not incur the obligation of medicine—
I did not get well—it was nothing bad !

جان دی، دی ہوئی اسی کی تھی
حق تو یہ ہے کہ حق ادا نہ ہوا

I gave my life ; it was given by Him,
The truth is that (He) was not truly repaid.

یہ جانتا ھوں کہ تو اور پاسخ مکتوب
مگر ستم زدہ ھوں ذوق خامہ فرسا کا

I know that—thou and the answer of the letter...
But I am under the tyranny of the writing mania.

حنائے پائے خزاں ھے بہار اگر ھے یہی
دوام کلفت خاطر ھے عیش دنیا کا

It is *henna* of the Autumn's foot, if this is Spring,
The pleasure of this world is the perennial distress of the heart.

گھر ھمارا جو نہ روتے بھی تو ویراں ھوتا
بحر گر بحر نہ ھوتا تو بیاباں ھوتا

Our abode, even if we had not shed tears, would have been desolate—
The ocean, if it were not an ocean—would have been a desert.

بعد یک عمر ورع بار تو دیتا بارے
کاش رضواں ھی در یار کا درباں ھوتا

After a whole life of devotion, he should have allowed me entrance;
Would that the Ridhwan were the *darban* of (my) friend's door!

نہ تھا کچھہ تو خدا تھا، کچھہ نہ ہوتا تو خدا ہوتا
ڈبویا مجھکو ہونے نے نہ ہوتا میں تو کیا ہوتا

When there was nothing, there was God; if there were nothing there would have been God :
My being has drowned me ; if I were not, what would—have been ?

بے مے کسے ہے طاقت آشوب آگہی
کھینچا ہے عجز حوصلہ نے خط ایاغ کا

Without wine, who has the power to face the disorder of cognizance ?
The humility of courage has drawn the lines of the cup.

سو بار بند عشق سے آزاد ہم ہوئے
پر کیا کریں کہ دل ہی عدو ہے فراغ کا

A hundred times we were freed from the bondage of love,
But what to do ? The heart is the enemy of freedom !

پھر مجھے دیدۂ تر یاد آیا
دل جگر تشنۂ فریاد آیا

Again I thought of my tearful eye,
The heart and the liver are inclined to cry.

دم لیا تھا نہ قیامت نے ہنوز
پھر ترا وقت سفر یاد آیا

The great Resurrection had not yet paused a while—
Again (I) thought of the time of thy departure.

زندگی یوں بھی گزر ہی جاتی
کیوں ترا راہ گزر یاد آیا

Life would have passed, even in that way,
Why had I to remember thy path ?

کوئی ویرانی سی ویرانی ہے
دشت کو دیکھ کے گھر یاد آیا

Oh, what a deserted place ! An awful waste !
At the sight of the desert, I thought of my abode.

تم سے بے جا ہے مجھے اپنی تباہی کا گلہ
اس میں کچھ شائبۂ خوبیٔ تقدیر بھی تھا

It is out of place for me to complain to you about my ruin,
In it there was just a trace of my good luck as well.

تو مجھے بھول گیا ہو تو پتہ بتلا دوں
کبھی فتراک میں تیرے کوئی نخچیر بھی تھا

Thou mayest have forgotten me, I might tell thee—
There was once a victim attached to thy saddle-straps !

بجلی اک کوند گئی آنکھوں کے آگے تو کیا
بات کرتے کہ میں لب تشنۂ تقریر بھی تھا

If there be just a flash of lightning, what then ?
She should have talked as I had lips thirsty for speech as well.

لب خشک در تشنگی مردگاں کا
زیارت کدہ ہوں دل آزردگاں کا

I am the "dry lip" of those who died of thirst :
I am the resort of the troubled-in-mind.

ہمہ ناامیدی، ہمہ بدگمانی
میں دل ہوں فریب وفا خوردگاں کا

All disappointment, all suspicion—
I am the heart of the deluded-by-faith.

توفیق باندازۂ همت ہے ازل سے
آنکھوں میں ہے وہ قطرہ کہ گوہر نہ ہوا تھا

Divine grace is in accordance with the measure of courage since *Azal*—
In (my) eyes there is a drop which did not become a pearl.

جب تک کہ نہ دیکھا تھا قد یار کا عالم
میں معتقد فتنۂ محشر نہ ہوا تھا

As long as I had not viewed my friend's stature,
I had not believed in the mischief of the Resurrection.

دریائے معاصی تنک آبی سے ہؤا خشک
میرا سر دامن بھی ابھی تر نہ ہوا تھا

The river of sins became dry on account of the shortage of water,
Even the end of my skirt had not yet been moist.

آئینہ دیکھ اپنا سا منہ لے کے رہ گئے
صاحب کو دل نہ دینے پہ کتنا غرور تھا

Having seen the mirror, she had to blush and blush—
How proud was the Damsel not to give her heart.

عرض نیاز عشق کے قابل نہیں رہا
جس دل پہ ناز تھا مجھے وہ دل نہیں رہا

I am not in a position now to offer the humility of love—
The heart I was proud of—that heart is no more!

جاتا ہوں داغ حسرت ہستی لئے ہوئے
ہوں شمع کشتہ در خور محفل نہیں رہا

I am going—taking with me the scar of the unfulfilled desire for Existence,
I am an extinguished candle—am not worthy of the Assembly.

مرنے کی اے دل اور ہی تدبیر کر کہ میں
شایاں دست و خنجر قاتل نہیں رہا

Oh Heart! think of another plan, for I
Am no more worthy of the hand and arm of the Assassin.

گو میں رہا رہین ستم ہائے روزگار
لیکن ترے خیال سے غافل نہیں رہا

Although I have been subjected to the cruelties of Time,
Yet, have I never been indifferent to thy thought.

کوهکن نقاش یک تمثال شیریں تها اسد
سنگ سے سر مار کر هووے نه پیدا آشنا

Farhad, the mountain-digger, was a painter of Shirin's portrait—a sculptor,
By striking one's head against stone, none can create a friend !

منظر اک بلندی پر اور هم بنا سکتے
عرش سے اُدهر هوتا کاشکے مکاں اپنا

We could have created another spectacle on high,
Would that our house were on the other side of the *'Arsh* !

درد دل لکهوں کب تک جاؤں ان کو دکهلاؤں
انگلیاں فگار اپنی خامه خونچکاں اپنا

How long shall I write about the pain of my heart ? I should go and show her
My wounded fingers and my bleeding pen.

هم کہاں کے دانا تهے کس هنر میں یکتا تهے
بے سبب هوا غالب دشمن آسماں اپنا

We were not so wise, nor unique in any art,
For no cause, O Ghalib ! the sky has become our foe.

سرمۂ مفت نظر ہوں مری قیمت یہ ہے
کہ رہے چشم خریدار پہ احساں میرا

I am the collyrium of sight—to be had *gratis*; my price is
That the eye of the buyer be obligated to me.

بزم قدح سے عیش تمنا نہ رکھ کہ رنگ
صید ز دام جستہ ہے اس دام گاہ کا

Expect not joy from the Assembly of the Cup, for, colour
Is a victim that has escaped this snare-spot.

رحمت اگر قبول کرے کیا بعید ہے
شرمندگی سے عذر نہ کرنا گناہ کا

If His mercy accepts—it is nothing impossible—
My putting forth no excuse for sin, out of shame!

رات دن گردش میں ہیں سات آسماں
ہو رہے گا کچھ نہ کچھ گھبرائیں کیا

Day and night, the seven skies are revolving—
Something must happen, why be confused?

لاگ هو تو اس کو هم سمجهیں لگاؤ
جب نه هو کچهه بهی تو دهوکا کهائیں کیا

If there be enmity, we would take it for connection,
But, if there be nothing, how to be deceit-fooled?

عشرت قطره هے دریا میں فنا هو جانا
درد کا حد سے گزرنا هے دوا هو جانا

The pleasure (life) of the drop is to perish in the river:
To exceed its limit is to be its remedy for pain.

ضعف سے گریه مبدل به دم سرد هوا
باور آیا همیں پانی کا هوا هو جانا

Due to weakness, the cry has been changed to cold breath;
We now believe that water takes the form of air.

دود کو آج اس کے ماتم میں سیه پوشی هوئی
وه دل سوزاں که کل تک شمع ماتم خانه تها

Smoke is to-day mourning in black the same—
That burning heart which, till yesterday, was the candle of the mourning-abode.

مند گئیں کھولتے ھی کھولتے آنکھیں غالب
یار لائے مری بالیں پہ اسے پر کس وقت

My eyes were closed just in an effort to see,
My friends brought her by my head-side—What a time!

نفس نہ انجمن آرزو سے باھر کھینچ
اگر شراب نہیں انتظار ساغر کھینچ

Do not draw breath outside the Assembly of Desire,
If there is no wine, wait for the cup!

تری طرف ھے بہ حسرت نظارۂ نرگس
بکوری دل و چشم رقیب ساغر کھینچ

The narcissus looks on at you with regret,
Quaff the cup to the blindness of the heart and eye of the rival!

شمع بجھتی ھے تو اس میں سے دھواں اٹھتا ھے
شعلۂ عشق سیہ پوش ھوا مرے بعد

When the candle is extinguished, the smoke rises from it;
The flame of love is mourning in black—after I am no more.

خوں ہے دل خاک میں احوال بتاں پر یعنی
ان کے ناخن ہوئے محتاج حنا میرے بعد

In dust, my heart is turned to blood, in view of the end of idols (Beauty);
Their nails are in need of *henna* after I am no more.

نہیں ہے سایہ کہ سن کر نوید مقدم یار
گئے ہیں چند قدم پیشتر در و دیوار

It is not the shadow—but hearing the news of the Friend's coming,
The doors and walls have moved a few steps forward!

نظر میں کھٹکے ہے بن تیرے گھر کی آبادی
ہمیشہ روتے ہیں ہم دیکھ کر در و دیوار

Without thee the prosperity of (my) abode rankles in my eyes;
We always weep at the sight of (our) doors and walls.

مقصد ہے ناز و غمزہ ولے گفتگو میں کام
چلتا نہیں ہے دشنہ و خنجر کہے بغیر

The object is grace and coquetry, but in speech
Expression is not possible *sans* words—poniard and dagger.

ہر چند ہو مشاہدۂ حق کی گفتگو
بنتی نہیں ہے بادہ و ساغر کہے بغیر

Although speech may relate to the observation of God's beauty—
The sense cannot be expressed *sans* words—wine and cup.

کیوں جل گیا نہ تاب رخ یار دیکھ کر
جلتا ہوں اپنی طاقت دیدار دیکھ کر

Why was I not burnt up, before the glow of my Friend's lustrous face?
It pains me to see that my vision is strong.

ان آبلوں سے پاؤں کے گھبرا گیا تھا میں
جی خوش ہوا ہے راہ کو پرخار دیکھ کر

I had been troubled to see the blisters of my feet—
My heart is pleased to see the path strewn with thorns.

گرنی تھی ہم پہ برق تجلی نہ طور پر
دیتے ہیں بادہ ظرف قدح خوار دیکھ کر

The lightning of God's splendour should have overtaken us, for,
*They* dispense wine according to the capacity of a drunkard.

وفا تعلیم درس بیخودی هوں اس زمانے سے
کہ مجنوں لام الف لکھتا تھا دیوار دبستاں پر

I have been taught mortality by the teachings of selflessness since—
Majnu was yet writing "L—A" on the wall of the school.

بجز پرواز شوق ناز کیا باقی رها هوگا
قیامت اک هوائے تند هے خاک شهیداں پر

Except the eager flight to see the graceful Friend, what would there be?
The Resurrection is—a violent wind (blowing) over the dust of martyrs.

یا رب وہ نہ سمجھے هیں نہ سمجھیں گے مری بات
دے اور دل ان کو جو نہ دے مجھ کو زباں اور

O God! she has neither understood me, nor will she understand;
Give some other heart to her, if I cannot be given another tongue!

تم شهر میں هو تو همیں کیا غم جب اٹھیں گے
لے آئیں گے بازار سے جا کر دل و جاں اور

If you are in the city, no anxiety can arise,
For (we) can fetch from the bazaar another heart and soul.

هر چند سبکدست هوئے بت شکنی میں
هم هیں تو ابهی راه میں هیں سنگ گراں اور

Although we have become expert iconoclasts,
While we exist, there are still heavy stones in our way.

لوگوں کو هے خورشید جهاں تاب کا دهوکا
هر روز دکهاتا هوں میں اک داغ نهاں اور

The people mistake it for a world-lightening sun,
But (in fact) I show daily a new secret scar.

نه کی سامان عیش و جاه نے تدبیر وحشت کی
هوا جام زمرد بهی مجهے داغ پلنگ آخر

The worldly lure of pleasure and position did not check my wildness,
For, even the emerald cup became the leopard's spot for me, at last.

اسد بسمل هے کس انداز کا قاتل سے کهتا هے
تو مشق ناز کر خون دو عالم میری گردن پر

Of what nature is Asad, the wounded lover who says to the Assassin,
"Carry on your practices, my neck is responsible for the blood of the two worlds!" ?

فارغ مجھے نہ جان کہ مانند صبح و مہر
ھے داغ عشق زینت حبیب کفن ہنوز

Think not I am free, because like the morning sun,
The scar of love still adds beauty to the *giriban* of my shroud.

آہ کو چاھئے اک عمر اثر ھوے تک
کون جیتا ھے تری زلف کے سر ھوے تک

My sigh requires long years to have effect—
Who will live till thy tresses are conquered ?

دام ھر موج میں ھے حلقۂ صد کام نہنگ
دیکھیں کیا گزرے ھے قطرہ کو گہر ھوے تک

In the snare of every wave is a loop of a hundred crocodiles;
See what happens to the drop till it turns into a pearl !

ھم نے مانا کہ تغافل نہ کروگے لیکن
خاک ھو جائیں گے ھم تمکو خبر ھوے تک

We admit that you will not show to us inattention, but,
We shall be dust long before you really know it.

پرتو خور سے ھے شبنم کو فنا کی تعلیم
میں بھی ھوں ایک عنایت کی نظر ھونے تک

Dew learns the lesson of mortality from the sun—
I only exist—till you cast a kindly glance !

غم نہیں ھوتا ھے آزادوں کو بیش از یک نفس
برق سے کرتے ھیں روشن شمع ماتم خانہ ھم

Freemen suffer grief for not more than a moment—
With lightning we light up the candle of our mourning-abode.

مجھ کو دیار غیر میں مارا وطن سے دور
رکھ لی مرے خدا نے مری بیکسی کی شرم

Death overtook me in a foreign country, away from my native land;
God has saved me the shame of friendlessness.

اگلے وقتوں کے ھیں یہ لوگ انہیں کچھ نہ کہو
جو مے و نغمہ کو اندوہ ربا کہتے ھیں

Those who call wine and song dispellers-of-grief,
Belong to the old times; say not anything to them !

هے پرے سرحد ادراک سے اپنا مسجود
قبله کو اهل نظر قبله نما کهتے هیں

Beyond the limit of perception is our object of adoration;
People of vision call Kaaba the sign-post to Kaaba.

رونق هستی هے عشق خانه ویران ساز سے
انجمن بے شمع هے گر برق خرمن میں نہیں

The splendour of Existence is due to the devastating (effect of ) Love;
The Assembly is without a candle, when lightning is not in the harvest.

مہرباں هو کے بلا لو مجھے چاهو جس وقت
میں گیا وقت نہیں هوں که پھر آ بھی نه سکوں

Be kind to call me at any time (you please)—
I am not the time past—that I cannot return.

ضعف میں طعنۂ اغیار کا شکوه کیا هے
بات کچھ سر تو نہیں هے که اٹھا بھی نه سکوں

When in weakness, why complain against the reproach of strangers ?
A word is nothing like a head that I may not lift.

زہر ملتا - ہی نہیں مجھکو ستمگر ورنہ
کیا قسم ہے ترے ملنے کی کہ کھا بھی نہ سکوں

I do not find poison, O tyrant! or else
Is it 'the oath of thy meeting' that I could not take ?

نغمہ ہائے غم کو بھی اے دل غنیمت جانئے
بے صدا ہو جائیگا یہ ساز ہستی ایک دن

Value even the songs of grief, O heart !
This instrument of Existence shall be still one day !

بوسہ نہیں نہ دیجئے دشنام ہی سہی
آخر زباں تو رکھتے ہو تم گر دہاں نہیں

If you cannot give a kiss, don't, let it be abuse,
You have at least a tongue, if not a mouth !

ہے ننگ سینہ دل اگر آتشکدہ نہ ہو
ہے عار دل نفس اگر آذرفشاں نہیں

If it is not a fire-place, the heart is an insult to the chest:
The breath is a shame for the heart, when it does not scatter sparks.

رنج نومیدئی جاوید گوارا رهیو
خوش هوں گر نالہ زبونی کش تاثیر نہیں

O anguish of eternal despair! Be thou ever agreeable!
I will be happy, if wailing does not suffer the insult of effect.

سلطنت دست بدست آئی هے
جام مے خاتم جمشید نہیں

Kingdom has passed from hand to hand;
The cup of wine is not the ring of Jamshid.

راز معشوق نه رسوا هو جائے
ورنه مرجاے مں کچهه بهید نہں

Lest the secret of the Sweetheart should be betrayed—
In dying, otherwise, secret there is none!

کہتے هیں جیتے هیں آمید په لوگ
هم کو جینے کی بهی آمید نہیں

'Tis said, the people live on hope;
We cannot even hope to live.

تا پھر نہ انتظار میں نیند آئے عمر بھر
آنے کا عہد کر گئے آئے جو خواب میں

That I may not sleep again for all my life—
waiting,
She promised to come, when she came in a
dream.

قاصد کے آتے آتے خط اک اور لکھ رکھوں
میں جانتا ہوں جو وہ لکھیں گے جواب میں

Till the messenger returns, let me write another letter,
I know what the Sweetheart will write in
reply.

مجھ تک کب ان کی بزم میں آتا تھا دور جام
ساقی نے کچھ ملا نہ دیا ہو شراب میں

How could the cup approach me in her
Assembly,
If the Saki had not drugged the wine ?

کل کے لئے کر آج نہ خست شراب میں
یہ سوء ظن ہے ساقی کوثر کے باب میں

Show not parsimony to-day in wine, for the
morrow—
It is evil-thinking in respect of the Saki of
*Kauthar*.

ہیں آج کیوں ذلیل کہ کل تک نہ تھی پسند
گستاخئ فرشتہ ہماری جناب میں

Why are we humiliated to-day? Till yesterday, we did not brook
The impertinence of an angel in regard to our dignity.

حاں کیوں نکلنے لگتی ہے تن سے دم سماع
گر وہ صدا سمائی ہے حنگ و رباب میں

Why does the soul part with the body at the sound of music,
If that sound is dormant in the lute and rebeck?

رو میں ہے رخش عمر کہاں دیکھئے تھمے
نے ہاتھ باگ پر ہے نہ پا ہے رکاب میں

The Rakhsh of life is going apace, let's see where it stops,
We have neither our hand on the rein, nor the foot in the stirrup.

آرائش جمال سے فارغ نہیں ہنوز
پیش نظر ہے آئینہ دائم نقاب میں

The beloved is not yet free from the adornment of beauty;
(She) holds always in front a mirror under her veil.

حیراں ہوں دل کو روؤں کہ پیٹوں جگر کو میں
مقدور ہو تو ساتھ رکھوں نوحہ گر کو میں

I wonder whether I should bewail the heart or mourn the liver—
If I could, I would keep a mourner with me.

چھوڑا نہ رشک نے کہ ترے گھر کا نام لوں
ہر اک سے پوچھتا ہوں کہ جاؤں کدھر کو میں

Envy did not allow me to disclose thy abode—
I ask every one, "Whither should I go?"

چلتا ہوں تھوڑی دور ہر اک تیز رو کے ساتھ
پہچانتا نہیں ہوں ابھی راہبر کو میں

I go a few steps along with every one who walks fast—
I do not yet recognise the guide, (Ah me!)

اپنے پہ کر رہا ہوں قیاس اہل دہر کا
سمجھا ہوں دلپذیر متاع ہنر کو میں

I consider the people of the world to be like myself:
I take the valuables of Art to be agreeable.

شاهد هستئ مطلق کی کمر هے عالم
لوگ کہتے هیں که هے پر همیں منظور نہیں

The Universe is the waist of the beloved of Absolute Existence—
They say that it is, but, we neither see nor accept it.

قطره ابنا بهی حقیقت میں هے دریا لیکن
هم کو تقلید تنک ظرفئ منصور نہیں

Our own drop, too, is in reality a river, but,
We do not like to imitate Mansur in his shallowness.

عشق و مزدوری عشرت گه خسرو کیا خوب
هم کو تسلیم نکونامئ فرهاد نہیں

Love and labour in the pleasure-palace of Chosroe, amazing!
We do not recognise the good name of Farhad.

اهل بینش کو هے طوفان حوادث مکتب
لطمهٔ موج کم از سیلئ استاد نہیں

For the people of vision, the storm of accidents is a school—
The impact of a wave is not less than the teacher's slap.

دونوں جہان دیکے وہ سمجھے کہ خوش رہا
یاں آ پڑی یہ شرم کہ تکرار کیا کریں

Having bestowed the two worlds (upon me), *they* thought I was pleased,
While modesty came in my way—why dispute ?

هیں زوال آمادہ اجزا آفرینش کے تمام
مہر گردوں هے چراغ رهگزار باد یاں

All the particles of Creation are on the way to decline ;
The sun of the sky is here a candle in the passage of the wind.

یہ هم جو هجر میں دیوار ودر کو دیکھتے هیں
کبھی صبا کو کبھی نامہ بر کو دیکھتے هیں

We are looking, in her absence, at the walls and doors ; the fact is—
(We are) sometimes looking for the zephyr and sometimes for the courier.

وہ آئیں گھر میں همارے خدا کی قدرت هے
کبھی هم اُن کو کبھی اپنے گھر کو دیکھتے هیں

Her arrival at our abode—divine power !
We sometimes look at her and sometimes at our abode

نہیں کہ مجھ کو قیامت کا اعتقاد نہیں
شب فراق سے روز جزا زیاد نہیں

No, it is not that I don't believe in the Day of Resurrection;
The Day of Judgment is not longer than the night of separation!

تری سرعت کے مقابل اے عمر!
برق کو پا بہ حنا باندھتے ہیں

As opposed to thy leisure, O Life!
They describe lightning as having hennaed feet.

دائم پڑا ہوا ترے در پر نہیں ہوں میں
خاک ایسی زندگی پہ کہ پتھر نہیں ہوں میں

I am not lying at thy threshold for all time—
Dust be upon this life, I am not even a stone!

کیوں گردش مدام سے گھبرا نہ جائے دل؟
انسان ہوں پیالہ و ساغر نہیں ہوں میں

Why should not the heart be confounded by constant circulation?
I am man (after all)—neither cup nor goblet.

یا رب زمانہ مجھہ کو مٹاتا ہے کس لئے
لوح جہاں پہ حرف مکرر نہیں ہوں میں

O God! why does Time efface me?
On the tablet of the Universe, I am not a word, reiterated.

حد چاہئے سزا میں عقوبت کے واسطے
آخر گناہگار ہوں کافر نہیں ہوں میں

There should be a limit to punishment, in order to chastise,
After all, I am a sinner and not an infidel.

سب کہاں کچھہ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہوگئیں
خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہونگی کہ پنہاں ہوگئیں

Not all, but some have appeared as tulips and roses,
Much beauty must there be concealed in the earth!

یاد تھیں ہم کو بھی رنگا رنگ بزم آرائیاں
لیکن اب نقش و نگار طاق نسیاں ہوگئیں

We had also in memory many-hued pleasures,
But, now they have become paintings in the niche of oblivion.

جوئے خوں آنکھوں سے بہنے دو کہ ہے شام فراق
میں یہ سمجھوں گا کہ شمعیں دو فروزاں ہو گئیں

Let the stream of blood flow from my eyes, for, it is the evening of separation—
I would conceive that two candles have been illuminated.

نیند اس کی ہے دماغ اس کا ہے راتیں اسکی ہیں
تیری زلفیں جس کے بازو پر پریشاں ہو گئیں

Sleep is his, mind is his and nights are his—
On whose arm thy locks have been dishevelled !

جاں فزا ہے بادہ جس کے ہاتھ میں جام آ گیا
سب لکیریں ہاتھ کی گویا رگ جاں ہو گئیں

Wine is life-giving—whoever happens to hold the cup,
All the lines of his hand, one would say, have become the veins of his soul.

رنج سے خوگر ہوا انساں تو مٹ جاتا ہے رنج
مشکلیں مجھ پہ پڑیں اتنی کہ آساں ہو گئیں

If man be accustomed to grief—then grief is effaced—
The excess of difficulties made the difficulties light for me.

دیوانگی سے دوش پہ زنار بھی نہیں
یعنی ہماری جیب میں اک تار بھی نہیں

Owing to distraction, even the sacred thread is not on our shoulder;
That is—our *giriban* has not even a thread!

دل کو نیاز حسرت دیدار کر چکے
دیکھا تو ہم میں طاقت دیدار بھی نہیں

The heart has been made a sacrifice to the longing for Vision—
We saw (at length) we had not even the capacity to see.

شوریدگی کے ہاتھ سے سر ہے وبال دوش
صحرا میں اے خدا کوئی دیوار بھی نہیں

On account of dejection, the head is a burden for the shoulders;
In the desert, O God! there is not even a wall!

دل میں ہے یار کی صف مژگاں سے روکشی
حالانکہ طاقت خلش خار بھی نہیں

The heart intends to come into conflict with the Friend's eyelashes,
While it has not the capacity to suffer the prick of a thorn!

دل هی تو هے نه سنگ و خشت درد سے بهر نه آئے کیوں
روئیں گے هم هزار بار کوئی همیں ستائے کیوں

It is the heart, not stone or brick—why should it not feel pain?
We would weep a thousand times, why should any one tease us?

دیر نہیں حرم نہیں در نہیں آستاں نہیں
بیٹھے هیں ره گزر په هم غیر همیں اُٹھائے کیوں

It is neither temple, nor Haram: neither door, nor threshold;
We are sitting by the wayside, why should one ask us to move?

قید حیات و بند غم اصل میں دونوں ایک هیں
موت سے پہلے آدمی غم سے نجات پائے کیوں

The bondage of life, the fetter of grief—in reality the two are one;
Before death, how could man attain salvation from grief?

هوں گرمیِ نشاط تصور سے نغمه سنج
میں عندلیب گلشن نا آفریده هوں

The heat of the pleasure of imagination makes me sing—
I am the nightingale of the garden which is yet to be!

حسن سے دل اگر افسردہ ہے گرم تماشا ہو
کہ چشم تنگ شاید کثرت نظارہ سے وا ہو

From narrowness of vision, the heart becomes frigid, so seek heat in seeing!
So that the narrow eye may be opened by the abundance of view.

کعبہ میں جا رہا تو نہ دو طعنہ کیا کہیں
بھولا ہوں حق صحبت اہل کنشت کو

If I moved to the Kaaba, don't taunt me, for, have I
Forgotten the people of the Fire-Temple and (the claims of their company)?

طاعت میں تا رہے نہ مے و انگبیں کی لاگ
دوزخ میں ڈال دو کوئی لے کر بہشت کو

So that in the worship (of God) there may be no impurity of wine or honey,
Let someone (for God's sake) throw Paradise into Hell!

وارستہ اس سے ہیں کہ محبت ہی کیوں نہ ہو
کیجے ہمارے ساتھ عداوت ہی کیوں نہ ہو

We are free from this—even if it be love;
Carry on the connection with us—even if it be ill-will!

ڈالا نہ بیکسی نے کسی سے معاملہ
ابنے سے کھینچتا ھوں خجالت ھی کیوں نہ ھو

Friendlessness did not allow me to deal with any one,
I derive from myself, even if it be shame!

ھے آدمی بجائے خود اک محشر خیال
ھم انجمن سمجھتے ھیں خلوت ھی کیوں نہ ھو

Man by himself is a Resurrection of thought—
We take it for an Assembly, even if it be privacy.

مٹتا ھے فوت فرصت ھستی کا غم کہیں
عمر عزیز صرف عبادت ھی کیوں نہ ھو

How can the grief for the loss of time in life be effaced?
Even if the precious life be spent in devotion!

خدا شرمائے ھاتھوں کو کہ رکھتے ھیں کشاکش میں
کبھی میرے گریباں کو کبھی جاناں کے دامن کو

May God put the hands to shame that keep in struggle—
One time my *girıban*, another the skirt of (my) beloved!

خوشی کیا کھیت پر میرے اگر سو بار ابر آوے
سمجھتا ہوں کہ ڈھونڈے ہے ابھی سے برق خرمن کو

What is the joy, if the pearl-sprinkling cloud visits my farm?
I understand that lightning is only looking for the harvest.

وفاداری بشرط استواری اصل ایماں ہے
مرے بتخانہ میں تو کعبہ میں گاڑو برہمن کو

Faithfulness with the condition of stability is the root of Faith;
If the Brahman breathes his last in the idol-house, O, bury him in the Kaaba!

دھوتا ہوں جب میں پینے کو اُس سیمتن کے پانؤ
رکھتا ہے ضد سے کھینچ کر باہر لگن کے پانؤ

When I wash the feet of my silver-bodied beloved in order to taste the Nectar,
She wilfully removes her feet out of the basin.

واں اُس کو ہول دل ہے تو یاں میں ہوں شرمسار
یعنی یہ میری آہ کی تاثیر سے نہ ہو

If she is terrified there, I am ashamed here,
Lest her terror be due to the effect of my sigh!

تم جانو تم کو غیر سے جو رسم و راہ ہو
مجھ کو بھی پوچھتے رہو تو کیا گناہ ہو

Your 'customs and ways' with the stranger are best known to you;
But if you ask about me, it would be no sin.

بچتے نہیں مواخذۂ روز حشر سے
قاتل اگر رقیب ہے تو تم گواہ ہو

We must render account on the Day of Judgment
If the Assassin is the rival, thou art the witness.

کیا وہ بھی بیگنہ کش و حق ناشناس ہیں
مانا کہ تم بشر نہیں خورشید و ماہ ہو

Are they the murderers of the innocent and also ungrateful?
Admitted that you are not a human being, but the Sun and Moon!

جب میکدہ چھٹا تو پھر اب کیا جگہ کی قید
مسجد ہو مدرسہ ہو کوئی خانقاہ ہو

On leaving the tavern, what restriction is there?
It may be a mosque, or a school, or a Khankah.

سنتے هیں جو بہشت کی تعریف سب درست
لیکن خدا کرے وہ تری جلوہ گاہ هو

All that we hear in praise of Paradise is correct;
Would that it were thy abode of splendour!

همارے ذهن میں اس فکر کا هے نام وصال
که گر نه هو تو کہاں جائیں هو تو کیونکر هو

In our mind the name of this thought is Union—
That if it weıe not to be, where to go? And if it be, how should it be?

اُلجھتے هو تم اگر دیکھتے هو آئینه
جو تم سے شہر میں هوں ایک دو تو کیونکر هو

You come into conflict, if you see your image in the mirror;
Should there be others like you (in the city), how would it be?

جسے نصیب هو روز سیاہ میرا سا
وہ شخص دن نه کہے رات کو تو کیونکر هو

One who is destined to a dark day, just as I am—
If he does not call the day night, how would it be?

وفا کیسی کہاں کا عشق جب سر پھوڑنا ٹھہرا
تو پھر اے سنگدل تیرا ھی سنگ آستاں کیوں ھو

What of Faith and Love when one is determined to break his head?
Why then, O stone-hearted one! should it be only thy threshold stone?

قفس میں مجھ سے روداد چمن کہتے نہ ڈر ہمدم
گری ھے جس پہ کل بجلی وہ میرا آشیاں کیوں ھو

O comrade! Don't fear to give me an account of the garden, while I am encaged!
How could it be my nest that was attacked by lightning yesterday?

یہ فتنہ آدمی کی خانہ ویرانی کو کیا کم ھے؟
ھوئے تم دوست جس کے دشمن اُس کا آسماں کیوں ھو

Is this mischief insufficient for the destruction of man's abode?
Why should the Sky be his foe, whose friend you happen to be?

رھئے اب ایسی جگہہ چل کر جہاں کوئی نہ ھو
ھم سخن کوئی نہ ھو اور ھم زباں کوئی نہ ھو

Let's now move to, and reside in, a place where there be none—
None to talk to us and none to understand!

بے در و دیوار سا اک گھر بنایا چاہئے
کوئی ہمسایہ نہ ہو اور پاسباں کوئی نہ ہو

There should be a house built, without doors and walls :
There should be neither a neighbour, nor a warden !

پڑیے گر بیمار تو کوئی نہ ہو تیماردار
اور اگر مر جائیے تو نوحہ خواں کوئی نہ ہو

If we fall ill, there should be none to tend us
And if we die, there should be none to mourn !

ابر روتا ہے کہ بزم طرب آمادہ کرو
برق ہنستی ہے کہ فرصت کوئی دم ہے ہم کو

The cloud weeps—that the Assembly of pleasure be organised :
Lightning laughs—that time is but a few moments !

ہے سبزہ زار ہر در و دیوار غم کدہ
جس کی بہار یہ ہو پھر اس کی خزاں نہ پوچھ

Every door as well as wall has become enmossed—
Whose spring is this, why ask about his autumn ?

تم ہو بت پھر تمہیں پندار خدائی کیوں ہے
تم خداوند ہی کہلاؤ خدا اور سہی

You are an idol, then why this pride of God-ship?
Let the people call you Lord—Let God be something else!

صد جلوہ روبرو ہے جو مژگاں اُٹھائیے
طاقت کہاں کہ دید کا احساں اُٹھائیے

A hundred lights are in front, if we open our eyes;
Where is the strength to undergo the obligation of sight?

دیوار بار منت مزدور سے ہے خم
اے خانماں خراب نہ احساں اُٹھائیے

The wall is bending owing to the burden of the labourer's obligation;
O thou, with a desolate abode! bear not the same burden!

مسجد کے زیر سایہ خرابات چاہئیے
بھوں پاس آنکھ قبلۂ حاجات چاہئیے

In the shadow of the mosque, there should be a tavern:
Close to the brow there should be an eye—the Kaaba of needs!

مے سے غرض نشاط ہے کس روسیاہ کو
اک گونہ بیخودی مجھے دن رات چاهئیے

Who, the accursed, holds pleasure as the object of wine?
I just require a sort of-forgetfulness, day and night.

ہے رنگ لالہ و گل و نسریں جدا جدا
ہر رنگ میں بہار کا اثبات چاهئیے

The colour of the tulip, and the wild rose is different in each case;
In every colour should be proved the existence of Spring.

خیال مرگ کب تسکیں دل آزردہ کو بخشے
مرے دام تمنا میں ہے اک صید زبوں وہ بھی

How can the thought of death pacify the troubled heart?
In my snare of desire, that even is a humble victim!

بیداد وفا دیکھ کہ جاتی رہی آخر
ہرچند مری جان کو تھا ربط لبوں سے

Notice the cruelty of Faith: my soul has departed at last,
Although it had an old attachment to (my) lips.

گھر میں تھا کیا کہ ترا غم آسے غارت کرتا

وہ جو رکھتے تھے ہم اک حسرت تعمیر سو ھے

What was in the house that thy grief could have plundered?
That abortive desire for building, we had, is there!

لپٹنا پرنیاں مں شعلۂ آتش کا آساں ھے

ولے مشکل ھے حکمت دل میں سوز غم چھپانے کی

It is easier for the flame of fire to be wrapped in silk,
But, to conceal the burning pain in the heart is difficult indeed!

لکد کوب حوادث کا تحمل کر نہیں سکتی

مری طاقت کہ ضامن تھی بتوں کے ناز اٹھانے کی

My strength, which boasted of bearing with the whims and airs of Beauty,
Cannot endure the onslaughts of misfortune; (Ah me!)

اُس شمع کی طرح سے جس کو کوئی بجھا دے

میں بھی جلے ہوؤں مں ھوں داغ ناتمامی

Like the candle, extinguished by someone,
I am also among the burnt—a scar of imperfection!

حالانکہ ہے یہ سیلی خارا سے لالہ رنگ
غافل کو میرے شیشہ پہ مے کا گماں ہے

While it is tulip-coloured, owing to the blow of granite,
The neglectful one presumes my phial to be wine.

بیٹھا ہے جو کہ سایۂ دیوار یار میں
فرمانروائے کشور ہندوستان ہے

One who sits under the shadow of the Sweatheart's wall,
Is the ruler of the realm of Hindustan.

عمر بھر کا تو نے پیمان وفا باندھا تو کیا
عمر کو بھی تو نہیں ہے پائداری ہائے ہائے

If you made a promise of faithfulness for all your life—what of it?
Even life has no stability—Alas! Alas!

سرگشتگی میں عالم ہستی سے یاس ہے
تسکیں کو دے نوید کہ مرنے کی آس ہے

In distraction, it is all disappointment from the world of Existence;
Convey the happy news to Complacence that there is hope of death!

لیتا نہیں مرے دل آوارہ کی خبر
ابتک وہ جانتا ہے کہ میرے ہی پاس ہے

She does not enquire after the condition of my wandering heart ;
Till now she knows it is already with her.

ہے وہ غرور حسن سے بیگانۂ وفا
ہر چند اس کے پاس دل حق شناس ہے

Owing to the pride of beauty, she is a stranger to faith,
Although she possesses a right-judging heart.

گر خامشی سے فائدہ اخفائے حال ہے
خوش ہوں کہ مری بات سمجھنا محال ہے

If the advantage of silence is the concealment of (one's) condition,
I am happy that it is not possible to understand my speech.

ہستی کے مت فریب میں آ جائیو اسد
عالم تمام حلقۂ دام خیال ہے

O Asad ! Don't be deceived by life, (beware!)
The whole Universe is a loop of the snare of thought.

تم اپنے شکوہ کی باتیں نہ کھود کھود کے پوچھو
حذر کرو مرے دل سے کہ اس میں آگ دبی ہے

Don't go deep in asking about the complaints against you—
Be cautious, there lies fire buried in my heart !

جی جلے ذوق فنا کی ناتمامی پر نہ کیوں ؟
ہم نہیں جلتے نفس ہر چند آتش بار ہے

Should not the heart burn to see the imperfection of the desire for mortality?
We do not burn, although the breath is raining fire.

مجھ سے مت کہہ تو ہمیں کہتا تھا اپنی زندگی
زندگی سے بھی مرا جی ان دنوں بیزار ہے

Say not to me, "You called me your life !"
I am tired even of life these days. (Ah change !)

خزاں کیا فصل گل کہتے ہیں کس کو کوئی موسم ہو
وہی ہم ہیں قفس ہے اور ماتم بال و پر کا ہے

No matter, it may be autumn, or, spring, or, any season,
We are the same—the cage is there and the mourning for wings !

قطع کیجے نہ تعلق ھم سے
کچھہ نہیں ھے تو عداوت ھی سہی

Don't break off all connections with us!
If there be nothing else, let it be ill-will!

ھم بھی تسلیم کی خو ڈالیں گے
بے نیازی تری عادت ھی سہی

We shall also accustom ourselves to resignation—
Let independence be thy habit, (O dear one!)

ڈھونڈھے ھے اس مغنئِ آتش نفس کو جی
جس کی صدا ھو جلوۂ برق فنا مجھے

My heart is in search of a musician, with a fiery breath,
Whose voice should be to me the lustre of the lightning of Mortality.

مستانہ طے کروں ھوں رہ وادئ خیال
تا بازگشت سے نہ رہے مدعا مجھے

Like a drunkard, I am traversing the passage of the valley of thought,
So that I may never think of retracing my steps.

کرتا هے بسکه باغ میں تو بے حجابیاں
آنے لگی هے نکہت گل سے حیا مجھے

Inasmuch as you walk about in the garden, unveiled,
I now feel ashamed of the fragrance of the flower!

رکھتا پھروں هوں خرقه و سجاده رهن مے
مدت هوئی هے دعوت آب و هوا کئے

I now go about to mortgage (my) patched-cloth and prayer-carpet for wine;
It is a long time since I have entertained the wind and water (spring).

بے صرفه هی گزرتی هے هو گرچه عمر خضر
حضرت بھی کل کہیں گے که هم کیا کیا کئے

In futility passes life, even if it be that of Khizr;
His Holiness would also say to-morrow, "What did we do?"

هاتھ دھو دل سے یہی گرمی گر اندیشه میں هے
آبگینه تندئ صہبا سے پگھلا جائے هے

Give up the idea (of the safety) of the heart, if such is the heat of thought;
The phial owing to the heat of wine is melting away.

نسیہ و نقد دو عالم کی حقیقت معلوم
لے لیا مجھہ سے مری همت عالی نے مجھے

The reality of the cash and credit of the two worlds is well known;
My exalted spirit purchased my own self from me.

کثرت آرائی وحدت هے پرستاری وهم
کر دیا کافر ان اصنام خیالی نے مجھے

To see plurality in unity is devotion to whim—
These imaginary idols have made me an infidel.

اُگ رها هے درو دیوار سے سبزه غالب
هم بیابان میں هیں اور گهر میں بهار آئی هے

O Ghalib! verdure has sprung up from the doors and walls;
We are in the desert and Spring has paid a visit to our abode.

دل سے تری نگاه جگر تک اُتر گئی
دونوں کو اک ادا میں رضامند کر گئی

Thy glance has passed from the heart right into the liver;
The two have been pleased in one graceful manner.

شق ھو گیا ھے سینہ خوشا لذت فراغ
تکلیف پردہ داریٔ زخم جگر گئی

(My) chest has been torn, blessed is the delight of freedom !
The hardship of the concealment of the liver's wound is no more !

وہ بادۂ شبانہ کی سرمستیاں کہاں ؟
اُٹھیے بس اب کہ لذت خواب سحر گئی

Oh, where are those moods of intoxication of the nightly wine ?
Let's arise now, for the joy of the morning sleep is gone.

اُڑتی پھرے ھے خاک مری کوئے یار میں
بارے اب اے ھوا ھوس بال و پر گئی

My dust is now flying in my Sweetheart's lane ;
At last, O Wind ! now the ambition to have wings is gone.

فردا و دی کا تفرقہ یکبار مٹ گیا
کل تم گئے کہ ھم پہ قیامت گزر گئی

The difference between To-day and To-morrow was effaced once for all ;
Yesterday you departed and over us passed the storm of Resurrection.

تسکیں کو ہم نہ روئیں جو ذوق نظر ملے
حوران خلد میں تری صورت مگر ملے

We would not weep for the consolation (of the heart), if we attain the joy of vision;
(We pray) that thy appearance be found among the Houris of Paradise!

اپنی گلی میں مجھکو نہ کر دفن بعد قتل
میرے پتہ سے خلق کو کیوں تیرا گھر ملے

Bury me not in thy lane after my death!
From my tomb, why should the people trace thy abode?

ساقی گری کی شرم کرو آج ورنہ ہم
ہر شب پیا ہی کرتے ہیں مے جس قدر ملے

Have regard for your Ṣakiship to-day, otherwise, we
Every night drink—as much as we can obtain.

تم کو بھی ہم دکھائیں کہ مجنوں نے کیا کیا
فرصت کشاکش غم پنہاں سے گر ملے

We would show you also what Majnun had done,
If we find freedom from the struggle of the inner grief.

لازم نہیں کہ خضر کی ہم پیروی کریں
مانا کہ اک بزرگ ہمیں ہم سفر ملے

It is not essential that we follow Khizr—
Admitted that we met an Elder as a fellow-traveller!

کوئی دن گر زندگانی اور ہے
اپنے جی میں ہم نے ٹھانی اور ہے

If there is life for a few days more, perchance,
In our heart, we have resolved—something else.

آتش دوزخ میں یہ گرمی کہاں؟
سوز غمہائے نہانی اور ہے

Where is this heat in the fire of Hell?
The burning of the inner pains is something different!

ہو چکیں غالب بلائیں سب تمام
ایک مرگ ناگہانی اور ہے

O Ghalib! All the calamities have ended;
An unexpected death is one more!

کوئی اُمید بر نہیں آتی
کوئی صورت نظر نہیں آتی

No hope is accomplished :
No chance of possibility one sees.

موت کا ایک دن معین ہے
نیند کیوں رات بھر نہیں آتی

For death there is a day appointed ;
Why can't I sleep all the night ?

داغ دل گر نظر نہیں آتا
بو بھی اے چارہ گر نہیں آتی

If the scar of the heart cannot be seen,
O physician ! Don't you even get the odour ?

ہم وہاں ہیں جہاں سے ہم کو بھی
کچھ ہماری خبر نہیں آتی

We are whence even we—
Don't get any news of ourselves.

دل ناداں تجھے ھوا کیا ھے ؟
آخر اس درد کی دوا کیا ھے ؟

O simple heart ! What has happened to thee ?
What is the remedy for this pain, tell me ?

جبکہ تجھ بن نہیں کوئی موجود
پھر یہ ھنگامہ اے خدا کیا ھے ؟

If there is nothing existent but Thee,
Then what is all this tumult ? O God !

یہ پری چہرہ لوگ کیسے ھیں
غمزہ و عشوہ و ادا کیا ھے ؟

Who are these fairy-faced people ?
What—coquetry, blandishment and grace ?

سبزہ و گل کہاں سے آئے ھیں
ابر کیا چیز ھے ھوا کیا ھے ؟

Whence come the flower and the grass ?
What are clouds ? What is wind ?

هم کو آن سے وفا کی هے امید
جو نہیں جانتے وفا کیا هے ؟

We expect faith from those
Who know not what faith is !

هوں کشمکش نزع میں هاں جذب محبت
کچھ کہ نہ سکوں پر وہ مرے پوچھنے کو آئے

I am struggling with life (last breath), O Attraction of Love !
Although I may say nothing—come she must to enquire after me !

هاں اهل طلب کون سنے طعنۂ نا یافت
دیکھا کہ وہ ملتا نہیں اپنے هی کو کھو آئے

Yea, O men of quest ! Who should hear the taunt of failure ?
Seeing that He is not to be found, we lost ourselves therefore.

کی هم نفسوں نے اثر گریہ میں تقریر
اچھے رهے آپ اس سے مگر مجھکو ڈبو آئے

My associates discussed the effect of lamentation ;
They fared better, but drowned me therein.

کہاں تک روؤں اُس کے خیمہ کے پیچھے قیامت ہے
مری قسمت میں یا رب کیا نہ تھی دیوار پتھر کی

How long shall I weep behind her camp? Woe is me!
O God! Was there no wall of stone to be part of my fate?

پنہاں تھا دام سخت قریب آشیان کے
اُڑنے نہ پائے تھے کہ گرفتار ہم ہوئے

Close to the nest lay hidden strong snares;
We had not yet attempted to fly when we were caught.

اے تازہ واردان بساط ہوائے دل!
زنہار اگر تمہیں ہوس نائے و نوش ہے

O new-comers to the carpet of the longing of the heart!
Beware, if you have the desire for drink and music!

دیکھو مجھے جو دیدۂ عبرت نگاہ ہو
میری سنو جو گوش نصیحت نیوش ہے

See me, if you have to take a warning!
Hear my word, if you have the ear to take advice!

ساقی بجلوہ دشمن ایمان و آگہی
مطرب بہ نغمہ رہزن تمکین و ہوش ہے

The Saki in splendour—the enemy of Faith and Cognisance:
The musician with song—the robber of Balance and Sense!

یا شب کو دیکھتے تھے کہ ہر گوشۂ بساط
دامان باغبان و کف گل فروش ہے

It was—that we saw at night every corner of the carpet—
The skirt of the gardener and the palm of the flower-seller.

لطف خرام ساقی و ذوق صدائے چنگ
یہ جنت نگاہ وہ فردوس گوش ہے

The joy of the gait of the Saki and the rapture of the cry of the lute:
This—the Paradise of Vision and that—the Firdaus of the Ear!

یا صبحدم جو دیکھئے آ کر تو بزم میں
نے وہ سرور و سور نہ جوش و خروش ہے

And now, on coming early in the morning, we would see in the Assembly,
Neither that joy and rejoicing, nor that tumult and cry.

داغ فراق صحبت شب کی جلی ہوئی
اک شمع رہ گئی ہے سو وہ بھی خموش ہے

Burnt by the scar of separation of last night's gathering,
There remains a candle, and that even is dead !

نفس قیس کہ ہے چشم و چراغ صحرا
گر نہیں شمع سیہ خانۂ لیلیٰ نہ سہی

The breath of Qais which is the eye and candle of the Sahara—
If there is not a candle in the dark abode of Leila, let it not be !

ایک ہنگامہ پہ موقوف ہے گھر کی رونق
نوحۂ غم ہی سہی نغمۂ شادی نہ سہی

On tumult depends the flourishing state of the house ;
Let it be a dirge, if not a song of rejoicing !

جلا ہے جسم جہاں دل بھی جل گیا ہوگا
کریدتے ہو جو اب راکھ جستجو کیا ہے

Where the body has been burnt, the heart also must have been burnt ;
You are raking the ashes now—what are you looking for ?

وہ چیز جس کے لئے ہم کو ہو بہشت عزیز
سوائے بادۂ گلفام مشکبو کیا ہے

That thing for which we may hold Paradise dear—
Except the rose-coloured musky wine—what could it be?

ہوا ہے شہ کا مصاحب پھرے ہے اتراتا
وگرنہ شہر میں غالب کی آبرو کیا ہے

He has become the companion of the King and struts about proudly;
Otherwise, in the city, what is the prestige of Ghalib?

آ کہ مری جان کو قرار نہیں ہے
طاقت بیداد انتظار نہیں ہے

Come, for, my soul has no rest, pray, come!
There is no power of endurance and patience to await!

ہجوم غم سے یاں تک سرنگونی مجھ کو حاصل ہے
کہ تار دامن و تار نظر میں فرق مشکل ہے

Due to the pressure of grief, my head is drooping so low,
That between the thread of the skirt and the thread of sight, it is hard to distinguish.

حسن مہ گرچہ بہ ہنگام کمال اچھا ہے
اُس سے مرا مہ خورشید جمال اچھا ہے

Although the beauty of the moon, at the time of perfection, is lovely,
Better than that is my Moon, the sun-faced beauty !

بوسہ دیتے نہیں اور دل پہ ہے ہر لحظہ نگاہ
جی میں کہتے ہیں کہ مفت آئے تو مال اچھا ہے

She does not give me a kiss but keeps an eye on (my) heart ;
She thinks that if she gets it for nothing, it would be good.

اور بازار سے لے آئے اگر ٹوٹ گیا
ساغر جم سے مرا جام سفال اچھا ہے

Another may be brought from the bazaar, if it breaks—
Better than the Cup of Jamshid is my clay goblet !

اُن کے دیکھے سے جو آ جاتی ہے منہ پر رونق
وہ سمجھتے ہیں کہ بیمار کا حال اچھا ہے

At her sight there passes a wave of lustre over the face ;
She thinks that the patient's condition is good.

ہم سخن تیشہ نے فرہاد کو شیریں سے کیا
جس طرح کا کہ کسی میں ہو کمال اچھا ہے

The adze enabled Farhad to talk to Shirin—
Whatever talent one has, is good !

قطرہ دریا میں جو مل جائے تو دریا ہو جائے
کام اچھا ہے وہ جس کا کہ مآل اچھا ہے

If the drop embraces the river, it becomes a river ;
The action is good, if its end is good.

ہم کو معلوم ہے جنت کی حقیقت لیکن
دل کے خوش رکھنے کو غالب یہ خیال اچھا ہے

We know full well the reality of Paradise, but,
Ghalib ! It is a good thought to please one's heart !

عشق نے غالب نکما کر دیا
ورنہ ہم بھی آدمی تھے کام کے

Only love has disabled us, Ghalib !
Otherwise, we were also men of worth.

پھر اس انداز سے بہار آئی
کہ ہوئے مہر و مہ تماشائی

Again, in such a way, the Spring has come,
That the sun and the moon have become spectators.

دیکھو! اے ساکنان خطۂ خاک!
اس کو کہتے ہیں عالم آرائی

Behold, O inhabitants of the Earth !
This is what they call world-adorning :

کہ زمیں ہو گئی ہے سر تا سر
روکش سطح چرخ مینائی

That the Earth has appeared from one end to the other,

Face to face with the dome of the jewelled sky.

سبزہ و گل کے دیکھنے کے لئے
چشم نرگس کو دی ہے بینائی

For the grass and the flower, in order to see,

The eye of the narcissus has been given sight

هوں زخود رفتهٔ بیدائے خیال
بهول جانا هے نشانی میری

I have transgressed my own self in the desert of thought;

Oblivion alone, O wayfarers ! is my relic now !

قدر سنگ سر ره رکهتا هوں
سخت ارزاں هے گرانی میری

My value is equal to the stone on the wayside;

My preciousness is very cheap. (Ah me !)

گرد باد ره بیتابی هوں
صرصر شوق هے بانی میری

I am the whirlwind of the way of agitation;

The violent wind of desire is my founder.

دهن آس کا جو نه معلوم هوا
کهل گئی هیچمدانی میری

As her mouth could not be discovered,

My ignorance came to light.

جس زخم کی ہو سکتی ہو تدبیر رفو کی
لکھ دیجیو یا رب اسے قسمت میں عدو کی

The wound which can be successfully darned—
O God ! write it in the fate of (my) foe !

اچھا ہے سر انگشت حنائی کا تصور
دل میں نظر آتی تو ہے اک بوند لہو کی

The conception of the tip of the hennaed finger is good ;
At least one can see a drop of blood in the heart.

آغوش گل کشودہ برائے وداع ہے
اے عندلیب چل کہ چلے دن بہار کے

The bosom of the flower is open for parting ;
O Nightingale ! Let's depart, for the days of Spring are going !

ہے وصل ہجر عالم تمکین و ضبط میں
معشوق شوخ و عاشق دیوانہ چاہئے

Union is separation in an atmosphere of gravity and restraint ;
The sweetheart should be playful and the lover passionate.

منحصر مرنے پہ ہو جس کی آمید
نا آمیدی آسکی دیکھا چاہئے

On dying, whose hope relies—
How obvious is his hopelessness !

ہر قدم دوریٔ منزل ہے نمایاں مجھ سے
میری رفتار سے بھاگے ہے بیاباں مجھ سے

At every step, the distance of the goal from me increases :
At my speed the desert is runing away from me.

وحشت آتش دل سے شب تنہائی میں
صورت دود رہا سایہ گریزاں مجھ سے

On account of the wildness of the fire of the heart, in the aloofness of night,
Like smoke, the shadow kept flying from me

موت کی راہ نہ دیکھوں کہ بن آئے نہ رہے
تم کو چاہوں کہ نہ آؤ تو بلائے نہ بنے

Should I not await death, which is sure to come ?
Should I love you—in case you don't come, calling is of no avail—?

وہ آکے خواب میں تسکین اضطراب تو دے
ولے مجھے تپش دل مجال خواب تو دے

She would appear in a dream and pacify my restless heart,

But, let the agitation of my heart allow me to sleep !

ابھی آتی ہے بو بالش سے اُسکی زلف مشکیں کی
ہماری دید کو خواب زلیخا عار بستر ہے

The pillow still gives out the fragrance of her musky locks ;

For our vision, the dream of Zuleikha is a shame for the bed !

ہر چند ہر ایک شے میں تو ہے
پر تجھ سی تو کوئی شے نہیں ہے

Although in every thing Thou art—
But—there is nothing like Thee.

ہاں کھائیو مت فریب ہستی
ہر چند کہیں کہ ہے نہیں ہے

Yea, be not deceived by Existence !

Although they might say, "It is," it is not !

شادی سے گزر کہ غم نہ ہووے
آردی جو نہ ہو تو دے نہیں ہے

Desist from pleasure, so that there be no pain !
If there is no Spring, Autumn there would never be !

نہ پوچھہ نسخۂ مرہم حراحت دل کا
کہ اس میں ریزۂ الماس حزو اعظم ہے

Ask me not to disclose the prescription of the ointment for the wounded heart ;
For, in it a particle of diamond is the major ingredient.

بہت دنوں میں تغافل نے تیرے پیدا کی
وہ اک نگہ کہ بظاہر نگاہ سے کم ہے

In many days thy inattention was able to produce—
That one look—which is ostensibly less than a look.

کرے ہے بادہ ترے لب سے کسب رنگ فروغ
خط پیالہ سراسر نگاہ گلچیں ہے

Wine is acquiring from thy lips a lustrous colour ;
The line of the cup is wholly the vision of the flower-gatherer.

اسد ھے نزع میں چل بے وفا برائے خدا
مقام ترک حجاب و وداع تمکیں ھے

Asad is on the verge of death, O faithless one! let's see him; for God's sake—
It is time to give up the veil and bid farewell to Dignity!

مرتے مرتے دیکھنے کی آرزو رہ جائیگی
وائے ناکامی کہ اس کافر کا خنجر تیز ھے

While dying, there would remain a desire unfulfilled—
Oh, ill-success! That infidel's dagger is so sharp.

میرے غم خانے کی قسمت جب رقم ھونے لگی
لکھ دیا منجملۂ اسباب ویرانی مجھے

When the fate of my dark abode was being written,
I was put down as one of its causes of desolation.

وائے واں بھی شور محشر نے نہ دم لینے دیا
لے گیا تھا گور میں ذوق تن آسانی مجھے

Alas! There even the tumult of Resurrection allowed me no rest;
To the grave had taken me my longing for restfulness.

قد و گیسو میں قیس و کوہکن کی آزمائش ہے
جہاں ہم ہیں وہاں دار و رسن کی آزمائش ہے

In the attraction of stature and curly hair is the trial of Qais and Kohkan ;
Where we are—there is the trial of the scaffold and string !

سنبھلنے دے مجھے اے ناامیدی کیا قیامت ہے
کہ دامان خیال یار چھوٹا جائے ہے مجھ سے

Let me recover myself, O Despair ! What a calamity !
Even the skirt of my Friend's thought is slipping out of my hands.

ہوئے ہیں پاؤں ہی پہلے نبرد عشق میں زخمی
نہ بھاگا جائے ہے مجھ سے نہ ٹھہرا جائے ہے مجھ سے

My feet have been wounded, at the very outset, in the battle of love :
I can neither run, nor can I stay, Oh, dear me !

بازیچۂ اطفال ہے دنیا مرے آگے
ہوتا ہے شب و روز تماشا مرے آگے

The world is only children's play before me—
It is a drama performed, day and night before me.

اک کھیل ہے اورنگ سلیماں مرے نزدیک
اک بات ہے اعجاز مسیحا مرے آگے

The throne of Solomon is just a trifle before me :
The miracle of Messiah is just a fable before me.

جز نام نہیں صورت عالم مجھے منظور
جز وہم نہیں ہستئ اشیا مرے آگے

Except in name, I do not recognize the existence of the Universe ;
The reality of things is nothing but a whim before me.

ہوتا ہے نہاں گرد میں صحرا مرے ہوتے
گھستا ہے جبیں خاک پہ دریا مرے آگے

The Sahara conceals itself in dust in my presence;
The river rubs its forehead on the dust before me.

پھر دیکھیے انداز گل افشانئ گفتار
رکھ دے کوئی پیمانۂ صہبا مرے آگے

See then the mode of (my) delivering a flowery speech !
Let someone place a cup of wine before me !

نفرت کا گماں گزرے ہے میں رشک سے گزرا
کیونکر کہوں لو نام نہ اُن کا مرے آگے

It smells of hate—I forego envy—
How should I say, "Don't refer to her by name!"?

ایماں مجھے روکے ہے جو کھینچے ہے مجھے کفر
کعبہ مرے پیچھے ہے کلیسا مرے آگے

Faith is checking me, while Infidelity is pulling me:
The Kaaba is behind, the Ecclesia before me.

خوش ہوتے ہیں پر وصل میں یوں مر نہیں جاتے
آئی شب ہجراں کی تمنا مرے آگے

They rejoice, but do not thus die at the time of meeting—
The longing of the night of separation came to pass before me.

گو ہاتھ کو جنبش نہیں آنکھوں میں تو دم ہے
رہنے دو ابھی ساغر و مینا مرے آگے

Although my hand moves not, still there is light in my eyes;
Let there be still the cup and the carafe before me!

نہیں بہار کو فرصت نہ ہو بہار تو ہے
طراوت چمن و خوبیٔ ہوا کہئے

If the Spring has no time, let it not, it is Spring after all;
Notice the freshness of the garden and purity of the air !

جب تک دہان زخم نہ پیدا کرے کوئی
مشکل کہ تجھ سے راہ سخن وا کرے کوئی

So long as one does not create the mouth of a wound,
It is difficult, indeed, to open the way of speech with thee.

کیا کیا خضر نے سکندر سے
اب کسے رہنما کرے کوئی

How did Khizr treat poor Alexander ?
Now, whom should one take as a guide ?

نکلنا خلد سے آدم کا سنتے آئے ہیں لیکن
بہت بے آبرو ہو کر ترے کوچے سے ہم نکلے

We have been hearing about the expulsion of Adam from Paradise,
But, bereft of all dignity, we came out of thy lane.

هوں میں بھی تماشائی نیرنگ تمنا
مطلب نہیں کچھ اس سے کہ مطلب ہی بر آوے

I am also a spectator of the incantation of desire;
I have no such object that the object be surely fulfilled.

جھڑکے ہے شبنم آئینۂ برگ گل پر آب
اے عندلیب وقت وداع بہار ہے

Dew is sprinkling water on the mirror of the rose petal;
O Nightingale! It is the time for the departure of Spring!

بے پردہ سوئے وادئ مجنوں گزر نہ کر
ہر ذرہ کے نقاب میں دل بیقرار ہے

Move not to the valley of Majnun without thy veil;
Every particle has under its cover a restless heart!

شعلے سے نہ ہوتی ہوس شعلہ نے جو کی
جی کس قدر افسردگی دل پہ جلا ہے

The flame could not have done what the longing for the flame has done—
How the mind has burnt over the frigidity of the heart!

مجبوری و دعوائے گرفتاری الفت
دست تہ سنگ آمدہ پیمان وفا ہے

Under compulsion—and the boast of being captivated by love;
The promise of faith is a hand, pressed under stone!

بیگانگئ خلق سے بیدل نہ ہو غالب
کوئی نہیں تیرا تو مری جان خدا ہے

On account of the strangeness of people, don't lose heart, O Ghalib!
If there is none thine, my soul! there is God.

واعظ نہ تم پیو نہ کسی کو پلا سکو
کیا بات ہے تمہاری شراب طہور کی

Moralist! Neither can you drink, nor offer it to anyone;
How wonderful is your pure (holy) wine!

لڑتا ہے مجھ سے حشر میں قاتل کہ کیوں اٹھا
گویا ابھی سنی نہیں آواز صور کی

The Assassin quarrels with me on the Day of Resurrection as to why I have risen,
As if the call of the trumpet of Israfil has not yet been heard!

کیا فرض ہے کہ سب کو ملے ایک سا جواب
آؤ نہ ہم بھی سیر کریں کوہ طور کی

It is not essential that every one should get the same reply;
Let's also pay a visit to Mount Sinai !

نے تیر کماں میں ہے نہ صیاد کمیں میں
گوشے میں قفس کے مجھے آرام بہت ہے

Neither the arrow is in the bow, nor does the hunter lie in ambush;
In the corner of the cage, I am in great comfort !

خوں ہو کے جگر آنکھ سے ٹپکا نہیں اے مرگ
رہنے دو مجھے یاں کہ ابھی کام بہت ہے

The liver has not turned into blood and dripped from the eye, O Death !
Let me remain here, for, much have I yet to do !

مدت ہوئی ہے یار کو مہماں کئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کئے ہوئے

It is a long time since we entertained our Friend as a guest,
And illuminated the Assembly with the sparkling wine of the cup.

کرتا ہوں جمع پھر جگر لخت لخت کو
عرصہ ہوا ہے دعوت مژگاں کئے ہوئے

I am again gathering the scattered pieces of my liver;
It is a long time since the eyelashes have been given a banquet.

پھر وضع احتیاط سے رکنے لگا ہے دم
برسوں ہوئے ہیں چاک گریباں کئے ہوئے

Again, I feel suffocated on account of my code of caution ;
It is years since I have rent my garment asunder.

باہمدگر ہوئے ہیں دل و دیدہ پھر رقیب
نظارہ و خیال کا ساماں کئے ہوئے

Again, the heart and the eye have become rivals to each other
Having arranged a feast for vision and thought.

دل پھر طواف کوئے ملامت کو جائے ہے
پندار کا صنم کدہ ویراں کئے ہوئے

Again, the heart is going to make the circuit of the lane of reproof,
Having laid waste the idol-house of pride.

پھر شوق کر رہا ہے خریدار کی طلب
عرض متاع عقل و دل و جاں کئے ہوئے

Again, Desire is demanding a purchaser—
Presenting forth the valuables of Reason, Heart and Soul.

دوڑے ہے پھر ہر ایک گل و لالہ پر خیال
صد گلستاں نگاہ کا ساماں کئے ہوئے

Again, Thought is flitting over every rose and tulip,
Having had a hundred gardens as the property of vision.

پھر چاہتا ہوں نامۂ دلدار کھولنا
جاں نذر دلفریبیٔ عنواں کئے ہوئے

Again, I desire to open the letter of my beloved,
Having sacrificed my soul to the charm of its heading.

مانگے ہے پھر کسی کو لب بام پر ہوس
زلف سیاہ رخ پہ پریشاں کئے ہوئے

Desire again demands someone on the edge of the roof—
Having her black locks scattered over her face.

اک نوبہار ناز کو تاکے ہے پھر نگاہ
چہرہ فروغ مے سے گلستاں کئے ہوئے

Again, Vision is staring at a "new-spring of elegance"—
Having turned her face into a rose-garden with the lustre of wine.

پھر جی میں ہے کہ در پہ کسی کے پڑے رہیں
سر زیر بار منت درباں کئے ہوئے

Again, I am of a mind that I should keep lying at her threshold,
Having my head put under the obligation of the *darban*.

جی ڈھونڈتا ہے پھر وہی فرصت کہ رات دن
بیٹھے رہیں تصور جاناں کئے ہوئے

The mind is looking for the same old nights and days of leisure—
To continue sitting in the blissful imagination of the Sweetheart !

نوید امن ہے بیداد دوست جاں کے لئے
رہی نہ طرز ستم کوئی آسماں کے لئے

Good news of peace to the soul is the Friend's injustice !
There is no manner of tyranny left for the Sky.

وہ زندہ هم هیں که هیں روشناس خلق اے خضر!
نه تم که چور بنے عمر جاوداں کے لئے

Among the living are we, acquainted with God's people, O Khizr!
And not you who became a thief for a life of eternity!

مثال یه مری کوشش کی هے که مرغ اسیر
کرے قفس میں فراهم خس آشیاں کے لئے

The instance of my effort is that of a captive bird
That collects straws in its cage to build a nest.

گدا سمجهه کے وه چپ تها مری جو شامت آئے
اٹها اور اٹهه کے قدم میں نے پاسباں کے لئے

Taking me for a beggar, he was quiet, but as ill-luck would have it,
I got up and flung myself at the gate-keeper's feet.

ان کو کیا علم که کشتی په مری کیا گزری
دوست جو ساتهه مرے تا لب ساحل آئے

What do they know as to what befell my boat—
Friends who accompanied me only to the river bank?

سامنا حور و پری نے نہ کیا ہے نہ کریں گے
عکس تیرا ہی مگر تیرے مقابل آئے

The Houris and fairies have neither faced Thee, nor will they;
Thy own reflection might come in front of Thee.

THE END